

Dale M. Schlitt

# German Idealism's Trinitarian Legacy

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DALE M. SCHLITT

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Published by State University of New York Press, Albany

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For information, contact State University of New York Press, Albany, NY  
[www.sunypress.edu](http://www.sunypress.edu)

Production, Eileen Nizer  
Marketing, Fran Keneston

### **Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Names: Schlitt, Dale M., author.

Title: German idealism's Trinitarian legacy / Dale M. Schlitt.

Description: Albany : State University of New York Press, 2016. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2016005980 (print) | LCCN 2016037205 (ebook) | ISBN 9781438462219 (hardcover : alk. paper) | ISBN 9781438462233 (e-book)

Subjects: LCSH: Trinity. | Idealism, German—History. | Philosophical theology.

Classification: LCC BT111.3.S35 2016 (print) | LCC BT111.3 (ebook) | DDC 231/.0440943—dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2016005980>

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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## Acknowledgments

Chapter 1 is a slightly modified version of my article, “The Whole Truth: Hegel’s Reconceptualization of Trinity,” *The Owl of Minerva*, Biannual Journal of the Hegel Society of America 15 (1984): 169–82, included here with the kind permission of Ardis B. Collins, Editor-in-chief of *The Owl of Minerva*. A previous version of parts of chapters 2 through 8 appeared in my chapters, “German Idealism’s Trinitarian Legacy: The Nineteenth Century,” “German Idealism’s Trinitarian Legacy: The Twentieth Century,” in *The Impact of Idealism: The Legacy of Post-Kantian German Thought*, ed. Nicholas Boyle and Liz Disley, vol. 4, *Religion*, ed. Nicholas Adams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), respectively 48–68 and 69–90.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to Mr. Andrew Kenyon, Acquisitions Editor, Philosophy, State University of New York Press, for his encouragement and for wise professional guidance through the process of review and publication. Sincere thanks to Ms. Maria M. Garcia, Director of the Oblate School of Theology’s Donald E. O’Shaunessy Library, for overall support and research help and to Ms. Carmen Rodriguez, Library General Services Manager, for so diligently hunting down and obtaining often hard-to-find items through interlibrary loan. A special word of thanks to Prof. Peter C. Hodgson for translation of one of Hegel’s remarks, particularly difficult to translate, in the margin of one of Hegel’s texts; to Prof. Renata Furst for discussion and insight concerning aspects of the notions of narrativity and plot; and to Prof. Dr. Martin Wendte for insightfully drawing attention again to Hegel’s and Schelling’s development of their thought on Trinity in relation with their thought on various religions of the world.



# Introduction

## *Identifying Idealist Influences*

The German Idealists Georg W. F. Hegel and Friedrich W. J. von Schelling are two outstanding thinkers in the overall Greek-Western tradition of reflection on Trinity. Following upon Johan Gottlieb Fichte's proposal to see subjectivity as triadic in structure, they each in his own way developed at great length philosophical readings of Trinity as movement of inclusive divine subjectivity. For Hegel that movement took on a more monosubjectival formulation and for Schelling a more intersubjectival structure. It has been rather widely accepted that they individually and together have significantly influenced many trinitarian thinkers who came after them.

Two previous, shorter studies have confirmed in an initial way that Idealist trinitarian thought, particularly that of Hegel and Schelling, has indeed had a considerable impact on much subsequent trinitarian thinking.<sup>1</sup> These studies led to the discovery that we can document further and more closely such impact in several ways by reviewing in detail specific texts from selected trinitarian thinkers. We can as well note what these thinkers themselves have often enough written concerning Idealist trinitarian thought and recall remarks made by others regarding possible Idealist influence on their thought. We can, furthermore, more directly reflect on what these thinkers have said about Trinity, considering it in relation to and comparing it with what the Idealists had said. When we make such comparisons in the context of various indications of Idealist influence on the thinkers concerned, we can recognize and reasonably affirm specific cases of Idealist influence on their trinitarian thought.<sup>2</sup>

The present study brings together the results of further research and reflection concerning the German Idealist trinitarian legacy. In order

properly to appreciate and evaluate these results it will be helpful first of all to present in somewhat more summary fashion particularly characteristic aspects of what Hegel and Schelling have in fact said about Trinity. This initial overview in part 1, combined with points concerning their trinitarian thought highlighted in the first part of the conclusion to the present study, will alert us to Idealist themes and approaches potentially influencing subsequent trinitarian thinkers. In this overview Schelling will require greater attention and, consequently, a slightly longer presentation than that on Hegel since Schelling's trinitarian thought seems less well known, especially in the English-speaking world, than that of Hegel.

To confirm the existence of, and further identify, the overall Idealist trinitarian legacy it is not necessary and perhaps not desirable to aim at more or less comprehensive coverage of potentially relevant trinitarian thinkers following after the Idealists. Rather, I have found that an approach focusing on a number of selected thinkers who in their trinitarian thought exemplify Idealist influence has proven more useful. This approach can help us avoid, so to speak, missing the forest for the trees. For there is a certain, dare we say, elegance in economy. Such economy involves making an argument in relatively succinct fashion, a variant on Occam's razor.<sup>3</sup> In the present case, we of course need to work with a sufficient number of thinkers permitting us to argue to, and exemplify Idealist influence on, subsequent trinitarian thinking. And, naturally, selecting such thinkers who may be expected to reflect something of that legacy is quite a delicate task. It inevitably leaves room open for further discussion as to whom we should include and why we should include them. But that is, in a way, the beauty of scholarly research and writing. More generally stated, one makes an argument. Others make counter arguments. And in the process they come to a deeper insight. Perhaps, then, more important than any specific decision taken here about who is to be included in the study is the discussion these decisions may encourage, thus bringing to light further possible indications of Idealist influence on later trinitarian thought.

A fuller consideration of reasons for including certain thinkers in the present study will surely require noting what is said about their thought in the various chapters and in part 2 of the conclusion. But perhaps it will be helpful at this point to summarize my "due diligence" in deciding which trinitarian thinkers to include here. In a first step, the selection process began with reference to a doctoral seminar on the notion of the Trinity offered during the academic year 1997–98 at Claremont Graduate School, now University, by Prof. Dr. Ekkehard Mühlenberg, presently emeritus

professor in Göttingen University. It continued with a review of material from undergraduate and graduate courses and seminars as well as doctoral seminars on Trinity I had offered over the years at Saint Paul University in Ottawa, Canada, and Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas. In a second step, these reviews led to the formulation of initial and then, over time, further developed selection criteria: (1) relatively direct access to the selected persons' trinitarian thinking which is readily available in a clearly analyzable fashion; (2) in some way documentable identification of the influence of Idealist thought on these persons' trinitarian thought; (3) at least for those in the nineteenth century, whether such persons may have played an identifiable role in the transmission of the Idealist trinitarian legacy; (4) for those in the twentieth century, whether they may have played an identifiable role in the transmission and further development of that legacy in a rigorously presented reading of Trinity; and (5) as a further consideration, whether persons could be chosen from earlier and later on in a given period of time being considered.

A third step consisted in actually selecting a number of trinitarian thinkers who might be expected to exemplify the influence of German Idealists on their thinking. A fourth step involved further reviewing potential candidates for consideration in preparation for a presentation on German Idealism's trinitarian legacy as part of an international conference. The conference, on the impact of Idealism, was held at Magdalene College in Cambridge University during the fall of 2012. In the presentation I focused more specifically on three nineteenth-century European examples, namely, Philipp Marheineke from very early on in the century, Isaak August Dorner from later on in the same century, and Vladimir Sergeyevich Solovyov from later on in Eastern Europe. Though time did not permit the presentation on Solovyov, there seemed to be considerable support at the conference for including him along with Marheineke and Dorner. Choosing several trinitarian thinkers from twentieth-century Germany proved much more difficult, given the good number of great theologians there expressing an ever-increasing interest in Trinity.<sup>4</sup> Finally I settled on Karl Barth, Karl Rahner, and Wolfhart Pannenberg as exemplifying, on one hand, respectively earlier, middle, and later twentieth-century trinitarian thought and, on the other, many and perhaps most of the different forms which Idealist influence took in twentieth-century German trinitarian thought.<sup>5</sup> At the conference various participants expressed general acceptance of the selection of these three. And no recommendations were made to include further post-Idealist European thinkers among the six included or at least referred to

in the presentation. I took these reactions to be encouraging confirmation of the reasonable viability of the initial selection, while realizing one could always consider further possible examples of Idealist influence. Such is in fact the nature of decision and choice. In a post-conference fifth step, it seemed important to include as well several American examples of trinitarian thinkers influenced directly or indirectly by Idealist thought: Robert W. Jenson; Catherine Mowry LaCugna; Joseph A. Bracken; and, my own more modestly developed thought.

The trinitarian thinkers here included often occupy strategic positions within the developing German Idealist trinitarian legacy and usually provide rather impressive and creative, rigorously constructed understandings of Trinity. They have been selected from many who have written on Trinity over a period of about 180 years and in several geographically distinct cultural settings. Given the varying distances of these trinitarian thinkers in time and space from Hegel and Schelling, it seemed wise to identify several ways in which these thinkers could be grouped together. Gathering them in these ways will help us highlight variously identifiable types of relationships between them, on the one hand, and Hegel and Schelling, on the other, as well as among themselves. The first three chosen, namely, Marheineke, Dorner, and Solovyov, have been gathered in part 2 under the rubric of "testimonials." Marheineke was among the first to work with the trinitarian thought of Schelling and Hegel. It is even said that he influenced Hegel's own further development of Hegel's philosophical reading of, or at least interest in, Trinity. Dorner represents a high point in the nineteenth-century development of what we would today call immanent Trinity. In dialoguing with both Hegel and Schelling, he created a unique understanding of Trinity that has considerably influenced a number of trinitarian thinkers in the twentieth century. Solovyov brought German Idealist thought in a massive way to the attention of Eastern, but especially Russian, philosophers and theologians. Marheineke, Dorner, and Solovyov are examples of those in the nineteenth century in Central and Eastern Europe who dialogue more directly and openly in an appreciative way with Hegel and Schelling.

In twentieth-century Germany a good number of trinitarian thinkers share certain overall social, cultural, and especially intellectual roots among themselves as well as with Hegel and Schelling. This doubled sharing suggests that we can consider and refer to similarities in trinitarian thought between them and Hegel and Schelling, as well as among themselves as "family resemblances." Among them, in part 3, we will treat of Barth, who rather single-handedly launched renewed interest in Trinity, especially among

Protestants. Rahner is surely one of if not the most important systematic Catholic theologian of the twentieth century. Pannenberg stands out for the exceptional breadth of his knowledge and force of his argument.

Then, in part 4 we turn to the North American scene. There we will review the proposals of four twentieth- and twenty-first-century trinitarian thinkers across the Atlantic from continental Europe. Jenson rather impressively replaces Hegel's logically structured presentation of Trinity with a carefully worded, temporally structured trinitarian narrative. LaCugna works with a series of thinkers variously influenced by Idealist thought as she daringly insists on a single Trinity of divine and human persons. Bracken takes on the whole Whiteheadian tradition. He transforms it in dialogue with, among others, Hegel and Schelling as he develops a trinitarianly structured relationship between the many and the one. I myself, in a considerably more modest presentation, propose to replace Hegel's development of his understanding of Trinity in terms of a movement of thought with a view of Trinity as a movement of experience. The image of "transatlantic Idealist echo" seems to reverberate well with and hence describe in a more general fashion the varied ways in which these four thinkers exemplify Idealist influence in their trinitarian thought.

Identifying Idealist influence on the trinitarian thought of these ten quite diverse thinkers will then serve to exemplify in a concrete way the continuing legacy of post-Kantian German Idealist trinitarian thinking. In order to recognize such influence we need to take one or more varied approaches to these thinkers, depending on what the nature of their thought requires and ways in which it develops. At times, they clearly and explicitly acknowledge a certain respect for and reliance on one or more aspects of Idealist trinitarian thought. Citing their remarks helps confirm a certain Idealist influence on their thought. At other times, pointing out a specific intellectual lineage traceable back through mentors of various kinds to the Idealists provides an at least partial basis for asserting a certain Idealist influence. Or again, drawing attention to the fact that trinitarian thinkers at times cite and build upon the thought of others who themselves have in turn been influenced directly or indirectly by Idealist thought in general and trinitarian thought in particular permits us to speak of a real but less direct Idealist influence. Of particular importance, it is helpful to compare aspects, perhaps insights, structural similarities, even words, phrases, structured movements of thought, and the like of a given thinker's reflection on Trinity with those of Hegel or Schelling or both. But we will not be concerned simply with similarities as such. Rather, we will, in the context



of the overall discussion of the thinkers concerned, want to consider such similarities as possible indications of Idealist influence. With our understanding of what Hegel and Schelling proposed, it will at times even be possible more spontaneously to have an "aha" moment. An example of Idealist influence on a specific trinitarian thinker will simply jump out at us and appear to be quite evident.

We need then to do a close reading of carefully selected texts presenting reasonably well important aspects of the trinitarian thought of a given author. That reading will be shorter or longer, depending on what we need to bring forth in regard to a specific author. For example, the summary of several aspects of Marheineke's trinitarian thought can be quite short. There our concern is simply to show specific aspects of his use of terms and note his probable influence on Hegel regarding Trinity. The presentation of Dorner's thought will necessarily be longer, given our interest in spelling out aspects of his notion of an ethical Trinity. Length of presentation will also depend on the way in which authors develop their thought. The presentations can be shorter if authors in effect concentrate the core of their trinitarian thinking in specific chapters or numbered articles. Such is the case, for example, with Rahner. They will need to be longer if authors tend to interweave their thought on Trinity with their reflections on a series of other subjects such as, for example, the relationships among various religions. An example here would be Solovyov. In effect, there are basically four grounds for varying the lengths of the chapters, not all of which need apply in each case and one of which may at times seem, at first sight at least, to offer a counterweight to another. The first ground or reason involves just what we want to say regarding the thinker concerned. The second reason is the very way in which a given thinker develops his or her thought on Trinity, namely, whether in more concentrated fashion, permitting a more focused and limited presentation or as the development of an understanding of Trinity interwoven with a more widely ranging thought. To these two should be added two more: a third reason, namely, the way in, and the extent to which, a particular thinker is or can be linked with reasonable security to Idealist thought; and a fourth, the way or ways in which a particular thinker may function in continuing the Idealist trinitarian legacy.

Whether shorter or longer, these close readings involve paying special attention to order of thought, dynamics of presentation, even specific choices of words and phrases. We will perforce want in various presentations of the thought of these ten trinitarian thinkers to stay rather close to the texts themselves. The hope is that we will, in reading these presentations, be able

ourselves to recognize further Idealist influences beyond those identified here, thus further advancing our understanding of the important German Idealist trinitarian legacy that continues on into the twenty-first century.

Yet in this enterprise a word of caution is in order. In examining these texts my own more immediate aim has of course been to recognize and appreciate the ongoing Idealist trinitarian legacy to which they give witness as they provide examples of Idealist influence on their authors. In so focusing, however, there is a danger that this way of proceeding could leave us with an unintended impression. We might feel that drawing attention to certain Idealist influences tends to overshadow, and thus diminish our appreciation of, the creative insight and constructive contributions found in the various works under review. But, important as these Idealist influences are, we should recall already now that they remain influences. In identifying these influences and briefly noting challenges Idealist trinitarian thought poses, I do not want to imply any sort of *reductio*. Rather, my purpose is to launch a *celebratio*. Drawing attention to the Idealist legacy should not reduce our appreciation of the outstanding creativity manifest in the various forms of trinitarian thinking to which we refer. It should not diminish our admiration for the enriching contributions these writers have made to ongoing reflection on Trinity. My hope is that it will lead us to celebrate that creativity and those contributions, preparing the road on which we continue, in varied ways, the Idealist trinitarian adventure.



PART I

---

THE IDEALIST TRINITARIAN ADVENTURE



## Introduction to Part 1

Fichte, but especially Hegel and Schelling, have had an enormous impact on the development of trinitarian thought. Through their creative philosophical interpretations of the ancient notion of Trinity they already influenced certain theologians of their day. But their enduring impact lay more in the influence, both direct and indirect, that they and their thought have exercised on much trinitarian thinking during the rest of the nineteenth century and especially throughout the twentieth on into the twenty-first centuries. We continue to feel their influence in trinitarian thinking even today.<sup>1</sup>

We can trace this influence back to the overall approach according to which, from early on, Fichte, Hegel, and Schelling, each in his own way, embraced and were fully enamored with what they understood to be the triadic structure of dynamically developing subjectivity. In their earliest philosophies they had not yet in an explicit way linked this overall fascination for triadic structure with the religious notion of Trinity. Yet their interest in the triadic predisposed especially Hegel and Schelling to consider Trinity from a variety of perspectives as they continued to develop their thought over many years.<sup>2</sup>

### Johan Gottlieb Fichte: Setting the Stage

Fichte (1762–1814) was the earliest of the three to focus so intensely on what came to be this Idealist trademark, namely, the triadic structure of subjectivity. In his search to find a way to ground all experience and knowledge he rejected Kant's notion of the thing-in-itself. He argued at length that all we had to deal with was consciousness as such.<sup>3</sup> In his groundbreaking work of 1794–95, *Science of Knowledge*,<sup>4</sup> he laid out his basic principle (*Grundsatz*), followed by two further principles. These three principles were

to ground all science and thinking. He reworked various parts of this study over the years following its publication. But it was his initial formulation of the triadic structure of subjectivity which had such a great impact on Hegel and Schelling, and with which we can briefly remain in view of present interests.

Fichte argued that all we have to start with is the basic principle: I = I; I am I; I am (*Ich = Ich; Ich bin Ich; Ich bin*).<sup>5</sup> Since the "I" does not adhere in anything else and underlies all experience, this is a principle of initial identity. With the affirmation of this first principle, Fichte is working out philosophy as a scientific knowing of knowing, a doctrine of knowledge based in one starting point. However, though this initial identity of the I is the certainty of my relation with myself, it does not explain its own reality, namely, being free as it is and yet limited. For Fichte, then, as a second principle the I posits or sets over against itself a not-I or not-self (*Nicht-Ich*).<sup>6</sup> The I posits itself as limited by the not-I, which is an other over against the I itself. The third principle is the recognition that each of these first two principles determines the other.<sup>7</sup> The I posits the not-I as limiting itself and the I limits the not-I. The I, as limited by the not-I, is passively posited. The I, as knowing it limits the not-I or object, is active. With this third principle Fichte accounts for the reciprocal interaction between self and other. These three principles underlie and ground the further elaboration of his systematic thought. He will go on later to work with a form of trinitarian expression.<sup>8</sup> But it is really his initial insight into the dynamic triadic structure of subjectivity which, as modified and further developed by Hegel and Schelling, has had an impact through their thought on subsequent trinitarian thinking.<sup>9</sup>

## Georg W. F. Hegel

### *A Daring Claim*

Hegel (1770–1831) acknowledged that Fichte followed in the tradition of Descartes and Kant when Fichte identified the I as an initial unity and, along with Kant, as the source of the categories of thought. He praised Fichte for taking the tremendous step of trying to show how the categories of thought arise in necessary fashion out of the initial I itself. But Hegel claimed that with the ever-recurrent presence of the non-I Fichte ended up in what Hegel called an absolute contradiction. The non-I should have been absolute and inclusive in its own right. So from Hegel's perspective Fichte ended up merely with the infinite of infinite progression, in which limit constantly recurs without an enriched return to a renewed identity. Though in Fichte's view thought was creative, Fichte was not able to reintegrate subjectivity and objectivity in a true concept of spirit as movement of inclusive subjectivity.<sup>1</sup>

Over the years Hegel worked out his mature, we could say, true concept of spirit. He presented that concept on the level of religion as a movement of inclusive trinitarian divine subjectivity. He first set forth his philosophical reading of Trinity in his 1807 *Phenomenology of Spirit*.<sup>2</sup> He then succinctly sketched out his readings of Trinity in the 1817, 1827, and 1830 editions of his *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences in Outline*.<sup>3</sup> He filled in these readings at greater length in his 1821, 1824, 1827, and 1831 lectures on the philosophy of religion.<sup>4</sup>

Hegel saw his true concept of spirit as bringing to explicit formulation the necessary movement of logical thought categories in, from the point



of view of his system, the first sphere of logic. This sphere was, formally speaking, a movement of inclusive subjectivity whose realization then occurs in the second and third spheres, respectively, of nature and spirit. These second and third spheres are, in contradistinction to the first sphere of logic, the realphilosophical spheres.<sup>5</sup> In his *Encyclopedia* sketches of this overall movement of spirit, his presentations of Trinity stand as penultimate or second-last moment. He identifies this moment as revealed religion and presents it just before his treatment of philosophy.

### The Shape and End Result of Hegel's Efforts

It will be helpful to take a first look at Hegel's philosophically informed efforts to reconceptualize Trinity, namely, to develop a philosophy of absolute or inclusive divine subjectivity. We can do this by summarizing selected aspects of his presentation of Trinity in the 1830 *Encyclopedia*. With this wider systematic context in mind, we will then consider at greater length his presentation of Trinity in his 1827 lectures on the philosophy of religion.

Hegel's *Encyclopedia* begins with logic, understood as movement of pure thought and, more precisely, with logic's initial moment. This initial moment is the thought category of pure being, the being of pure thought. It ends in an enriching advance that, in the philosophy of absolute spirit, is equally enriched resultant return to what was the initial movement of logic. But now, at the end of this encyclopedic, self-developing movement of spirit, the logical concept has become the philosophical concept. Here form and content are truly and fully adequate. Hegel would say that concept and reality are united in the absolute idea. Indeed, as its title indicates, the *Encyclopedia* constitutes an outline of Hegel's overall mature philosophical system. It does this, as we have intimated, not as a mere juxtaposition of philosophical sciences. Rather, it presents absolute spirit as idea developing from the immediacy of logic to the logical idea's self-othering in nature and finite spirit. This development of spirit continues as enriching, advancing return through finite spirit in philosophic thought to the renewed and enriched immediacy, or identity, of the idea. This overall movement from logic to the realphilosophical spheres, culminating in philosophy, is a process of self-determination by absolute spirit. The movement of spirit occurs in logic as inclusive subjectivity, in nature as self-othering of the idea, and then in and through art, religion, and philosophy as absolute subjectivity.

Within this overall process Hegel places revealed religion, which he identifies with Christianity and especially Lutheran Christianity, as the penultimate sphere. In this sphere the content is true but the form is as yet burdened with pictorial representation. It is only the ultimate sphere, philosophy, which is characterized by conceptual clarity. He presents revealed religion schematically in the form of a syllogistically structured “immanent” and “economic,” so to speak, divine self-revelation. This divine self-revelation is the self-development of trinitarian divine subjectivity, the movement of spirit in the realm of revealed religion. He employs an explicitly religious or representational, but nevertheless always philosophically informed, language to lay out “immanent” and “economic” Trinity. He sees these as three syllogistically structured moments of universality (U, *Allgemeinheit*), particularity (P, *Besonderheit*), and individuality (I, *Einzelheit*).<sup>6</sup> He again develops the last of these, individuality, as a movement of three self-mediating syllogisms. In the *Encyclopedia* this moment of individuality climaxes as the effective self-revelation of absolute spirit in and through finite spirit in community. It is the final moment of syllogistically structured divine trinitarian reconciliation. In the sphere of religious representation this reconciliation remains the movement of self-determining divine subjectivity. It has not yet been explicitly established as mediation of the absolute self or concept in the form of philosophical thought where the otherness indicated by reference to God will have been overcome.<sup>7</sup>

In his encyclopedic system as a whole, this final moment, namely, philosophical thought, is for Hegel the truth or perfect correspondence of subject and object, or better, of self and concept.<sup>8</sup> It is this perfect correspondence or absolute spirit, this infinite or inclusive totality, only in so far as it is the end result inclusive of the whole process. As the final moment, philosophy is for Hegel the grounding return to the immediacy of logical thought. It is this enriched return which finally justifies seeing Hegel’s realphilosophical spheres themselves, and in particular his philosophical thought or concept, as his reconceptualization of Trinity. Moreover, it is this return that justifies recognizing his logic as the appropriate systematic logical reformulation of “immanent” Trinity, with “immanent” carefully nuanced so as not to insinuate an independently *existent* reality. This return on the part of philosophical thought explains why Hegel can use philosophically reinterpreted representational language to describe logic as the presentation of God as God is in the eternal divine essence before the creation of nature and finite spirit.<sup>9</sup>

When we look at his encyclopedic system, we see that from the perspective of his system in its speculative formulation Hegel appropriately treats of “immanent” Trinity twice. He does this first as movement of self-determining inclusive subjectivity in the form of pure thought or logic. He treats of “immanent” Trinity again as moment of universality in the realphilosophical sphere of the philosophy of religion. He likewise presents “economic” Trinity twice. He does this, first, in the realphilosophical sphere of the philosophy of religion as including “immanent” Trinity. Second, he again treats of “economic” Trinity in philosophical thought as grounding return, as enriched return that justifies the whole process. This return is both to the immediacy of “immanent” Trinity on the level of philosophy of religion and to the immediacy of logic on the level of spirit as a whole. The encyclopedic system is, in its totality, Hegel’s philosophically reinterpreted presentation of “economic” Trinity inclusive of “immanent” Trinity. Hegel rather humbly, though daringly as well, ends his 1827 and 1830 editions of the *Encyclopedia* with his famous quote from Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*: “For it is this, what God is” (τοῦτο γὰρ ὁ Θεός).<sup>10</sup>

In this overall sweep identified by Hegel as what God is, “immanent” Trinity is the initial moment structuring the overall dynamic of divine self-development as self-revelation. From the perspective of his system in its speculative presentation, this overall dynamic is a movement from initial identity to difference to enriched, grounding we could say, return as renewed, inclusive identity. It is a movement from initial infinite, to finitude, to inclusive or true infinite.<sup>11</sup> In this way, logically reformulated as inclusive subject, religiously represented as absolute divine subjectivity, and philosophically reconceptualized as absolute spirit, Trinity is for Hegel the whole truth.

In order to flesh out Hegel’s briefer presentation in the 1830 *Encyclopedia*, we need now to focus on his lectures and, more specifically, his well-developed 1827 lectures. In these lectures Hegel clearly saw religion as the consciousness of the all-encompassing object or God, which has become the fully inclusive self-consciousness of absolute spirit. This inclusive self-consciousness is trinitarian divine self-positing subjectivity. It is, as was the case in the *Encyclopedia*, a movement in and through finite spirit from universality to particularity to individuality.<sup>12</sup> In examining more closely what Hegel said about Trinity in his 1827 lectures, we will first look at what he said in his mature systematic reinterpretation of Trinity. We will then speak of how and why he argued so forcefully concerning the importance of thinking God as Trinity.

Over the course of his four series of lectures on the philosophy of religion, Hegel apportioned theological content somewhat differently in various presentations of the second and third moments in the movement of self-positing trinitarian divine subjectivity. Still the basic progression of this movement from first to second to third sphere or element is consistently describable in terms of moments of the concept as, respectively, universality, particularity, and individuality.

We are here proposing that Hegel sets up the dialectical movement in each of these three elements in such a way that it develops according to, and therefore manifests, a specific syllogistic structure. When we speak of syllogism here, we should mention that we mean Hegel's particular interpretation of the syllogism and not merely the traditional understanding of syllogism as a form of three-termed movement of inference. Hegel gave to this traditional notion of syllogism a specific dialectical spin when he placed it as a thought determination or moment in the movement of pure thought. For him it was a movement of inclusive subjectivity. It was a self-mediating development of thought, progressing on the basis of a middle term that mediated between the two extremes, the syllogism's major and minor premises.

It is especially in his 1827 lectures on the philosophy of religion that Hegel uses considerable terminology from his *Science of Logic* to describe the first element of the consummate religion. He refers to this element as the overall appearance of God. It is the divine idea or the realized unity of concept and reality, in the realm of thought as universality, the immediacy of the "in itself" (*an sich*).<sup>13</sup> His use of logical terms, and especially of the three moments of the concept, is particularly appropriate with regard to this first element since it is the appearance of the divine idea in the realm of thought. This self-enclosed movement of, theologically speaking, "immanent" Trinity is for Hegel the concrete universal containing otherness within itself. It is, in its own way, the moment of initial identity. It contains this otherness within itself as moment of judgment or separation as negation, the begetting, so to speak, of itself as the Son, but it does this only as a sort of play. With otherness so understood here as moment of negation, Hegel sets up a dialectical moment at the very core of God's being. He has built the formal structure of the crucifixion and death of Christ into the very movement of "immanent" Trinity. With otherness as moment of negation, he wants us to think together, dialectically, initial identity (God the Father) with the other (God the Son) of that initial identity in their momentary contradiction (positive and negative, universal and particular). As was just

mentioned, for Hegel here in the first element of the consummate religion this otherness arises only as a sort of play. Still, the distinguishing is itself, as difference, momentarily the entire idea. In line with Hegelian dialectical thinking, when the contradiction of universal and its negation or its other is thought through they are seen to have become a new identity, traditionally referred to theologically as the Holy Spirit. For the other is the other of this initial identity, which it thus includes. This inner dynamic of otherness, or particularity, functions as mediating totality inclusive of the extremes of universality and of the resultant identity as individuality. In this way, it presents the triadic structure of inclusive and, here, absolute subjectivity. When thought through, this movement of subjectivity takes on the form of the logical thought determination that Hegel calls the categorical syllogism (U-P-I).<sup>14</sup>

The second element in the development of the consummate religion as movement of spirit is the appearance of the divine idea in the doubled movement of diremption and reconciliation.<sup>15</sup> It is the sphere of particularity, difference, and objectivity. It appears as the movement of judgment in which the divine idea comes into existence "for itself" (*für sich*). In this element, characterized by contradiction, the divine idea others itself as an independent world in and out of which there arises finite spirit. Within this world finite spirit in turn distinguishes itself from nature and from its own nature. This distinguishing that goes on within finite spirit gives rise to the contradictory reality of finite spirit as both good and evil. It is one with its nature, namely, with what it should be, and yet is not what it should be. So, finite spirit is self-estrangement. The very establishment of this contradictory character of finite spirit is itself the indication of a need for reconciliation. According to Hegel, such reconciliation has to occur in an exclusive individuality. It has to take place in an individual divine-human self, in the mediating death of Christ. Hegel goes on to present reconciliation in the particularity of the community's consciousness of an immediate existence spiritually interpreted as the risen Christ. As this historical appearance of the divine idea, the second element of the consummate religion is the moment of objectivity in the overall development of God as spirit. This historical appearance of the divine idea has taken place as a triadically structured movement. The movement occurs from God, as presupposed universality, to the particularity of the community's spiritual consciousness of the risen Christ by means of mediating individuality, the doubled individuality of nature and finite spirit. Mediating individuality reaches its climactic depths in the death of Christ. For the philosophically informed religious conscious-

ness, this triadic structure of the absolute subject reveals the form of what Hegel identifies as the hypothetical syllogism (U-I/I-P).<sup>16</sup>

In the third element of the consummate religion, namely, in spiritual community,<sup>17</sup> the objective reconciliation achieved in Christ has become the subjective relationship of the individual subject to this objective reconciliation with the truth. The previous two elements of the consummate religion, and now this third element, are for Hegel the very progression of the idea of God and, indeed, of God as spirit.<sup>18</sup> They are the absolute eternal idea “in itself” (*an sich*), “for itself” (*für sich*), and now “in and for itself” (*an und für sich*). These elements are the very life and activity of God consummated in the third element as the community or unity of the individual empirical subjects who are filled by the Spirit of God. These subjects are individuals who live in the Spirit of God and with whom the Spirit of God is dialectically identified. God existing in and as the community of finite subjects is the very realization of God as spirit, the Holy Spirit or reconciling return of the divine idea out of the self-othering of judgment. The third element of the consummate religion is the movement of inclusive, and now absolute, divine subjectivity.

This third element develops as the reconciliation of the individual believer with the life, death, and resurrection of Christ in three stages. These stages are: first, the origin of the community in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit; second, the realization or actualization of the community through faith, doctrine, church, and Eucharist; and, third, the realization of the spirituality of the community in universal actuality as philosophy. In the first stage, the community originates in the particularity of a shared religious consciousness. In the second stage, Hegel sees the various theologoumena there discussed as the reconciling active presence of the spirit. This presence of the spirit is the objectively presented universality of truth mediating the objective reconciliation, already obtained in Christ, to the individual subjects. In the third stage, he presents the movement from the shared conscious inner enjoyment of the presence of God, which was achieved in the second stage, to an adequate mediation in self-knowledge, in philosophical thought. The knowledge of being at peace with God has become knowledge of being at peace with oneself. Here in philosophical thought, knowledge or subjectivity is recognized as developing out of itself and as reconciling itself with itself. For Hegel this rationality is true freedom. Philosophy is the comprehending thought which, as essentially concrete, determines itself to its totality, the idea. It is absolute spirit, the very peace of God, true individuality.<sup>19</sup> In this third element of the consummate religion,

the mediation of particularity with inclusive individuality occurs by means of objective universality (P-U-I) as religious reconciliation in community. It is the realization of what Hegel calls the disjunctive syllogism<sup>20</sup> and is, overall, the moment of individuality. It results, as dynamic movement of spirit, both in a grounding return to the immediacy or identity of "immanent" Trinity in the realphilosophical sphere of revealed religion and in the advance to philosophical thinking.

### How Hegel Argued His Trinitarian Position

Hegel is always doing philosophy ultimately from the perspective of the concept. So his presentation of his realphilosophical trinitarian thought is itself already a response to the question of how he argued his trinitarian position. For Hegel, correct presentation is argumentation. Nevertheless, it is important to refer more directly to the 1812/1816 *Science of Logic* for two reasons.<sup>21</sup> The first is that for Hegel logic represents the appropriate reformulation of "immanent" Trinity as self-determining inclusive subjectivity. The second is the way in which he conceives of the systematic relationship between the realphilosophical spheres and the sphere of logic. This latter is the movement of pure thought as a series of self-positing thought determinations. For Hegel logic is discovered and "contained" in the spheres of nature and spirit since it is their inner formative principle. Specific logical thought determinations arise out of and are thereby revealed as such inner formative principles in the spheres of nature and spirit. These principles can then be examined in the clarity of their archetypal expression as moments in the dialectical movement of pure thought. So logic itself likewise is and "contains" the spheres of nature and spirit insofar as it is their archetype.<sup>22</sup> Hegel's construction of a dynamic logic, a post-Kantian replacement for traditional metaphysics, forms his strongest and most prolonged argumentation for his philosophical interpretation of Trinity. He reconceptualized Trinity by means of an ontological reinterpretation of "immanent" Trinity.

It will be helpful to recall that Hegel's reconceptualization of the triune God is a process of sublation (*Aufhebung*) in which there has occurred a triply structured transition of negation, preservation, and development. The Trinity of religious representation retains for Hegel the characteristics of three independently represented subjects in an inadequately purified parental and filial relationship. This is true particularly for popular piety, but also for dogmatic theology.<sup>23</sup> Hegel's reconceptualization negates such a representa-

tion. It negates as well the continuing projection of reconciliation insofar as it is achieved in a divine subject over against the self. The true content of this religious reconciliation is preserved, according to Hegel,<sup>24</sup> in the move to philosophical thought as the full mediation of subject and object, self and concept, in self-determining conceptual thought. As purification this transition not only negates but preserves in a truer form, and therefore develops, the true content expressed as Trinity. Nowhere can this sublation be more clearly seen than in Hegel's proposal to translate what appears on the level of religious representation as divine freedom, namely, to create or not to create, into a logically necessary self-othering of the absolute idea in, and as, nature. Hegel calls this self-othering as logically necessitarian self-determination "free self-release" (*"frey entläßt"*).<sup>25</sup>

Hegel understood logic to be an immanent and consistent, internally self-justifying progression of thought determinations. Already in the philosophy of religion he had, in principle, elaborated creation and crucifixion within "immanent" Trinity by means of his understanding of difference as negation. Now in the dialectical movement of self-positing and self-determining logical thought he has integrated positivity by defining it as otherness characterized as negation. It is, then, the overcoming of this negation in the realization that the other is the other of the initial identity which constitutes the fundamental dynamic of self-determining pure thought. Logic presents the structure of inclusive subjectivity as self-relationality. The speculative dialectic of self-relationality is what underlies all of Hegel's mature systematic thought, including his reconceptualization of trinitarian divine subjectivity.

For Hegel the logical thought determinations or categories are themselves nontemporal "momentary" totalities of the concept. There is no underlying subject or thinker. Each thought determination arises as a momentary totality within Hegel's dialectically developing movement of inclusive subjectivity. Each is, in its own way, a form of becoming (*werdend*).<sup>26</sup> To the extent, then, that the structure of "going over into" or self-donation is constitutive of all logical moments, Hegel's speculative presentation of the movement of pure thought is as a whole the systematic reformulation of "immanent" Trinity. It is equally the archetypal structure of "economic" Trinity. Furthermore, to the extent that such "self-donation" is the dynamic structure of personhood, or better with reference to logic, of subjectivity, Hegel has managed to elaborate in a logical formulation what was for him represented in the consummate religion as a tri-personal God.<sup>27</sup> Though he carries out this elaboration in the singular and speaks simply of person or



subject,<sup>28</sup> Hegel is, in regard to logic, not referring to an existent. He thinks, in a post-nominalist framework, of the concrete universal as the structure of subjectivity. In his so thinking we can see Hegel as one attempting to move beyond the dichotomy between what would today be termed mono-subjectival and societal formulations of Trinity.

### Systematic Concerns Motivating Hegel's Reconceptualization

In order to get at some of the systematic religious and philosophical concerns motivating his endeavor, we can reformulate the question of why Hegel reconceptualized Trinity as follows: What did he see was at stake in his attempt to reconceptualize the trinitarian God from the perspective of the concept? We can indicate what is in play for Hegel by reviewing religious-representational formulations of his claim that God can be conceived adequately as person, subject, and spirit only if God is conceived as Trinity. We can then infer the underlying philosophical concerns which pushed him to reinterpret Trinity, and to do this in specific ways, from his resultant philosophical position as a whole.

In his manuscript for the 1821 philosophy of religion lectures on the consummate religion Hegel wrote, "God is *spirit*—that which we call the *triune* God."<sup>29</sup> God is spirit because God becomes the other and sublates this other.<sup>30</sup> Hegel claims that God remains but an empty word if God is not grasped as triune.<sup>31</sup> He is concerned to establish a concept of God which does not leave personhood behind.<sup>32</sup> There is, then, a particular earnest with which he allows his concerns to surface as he makes this claim that only if God is known as what would today be termed "immanent" and "economic" Trinity can God be known as spirit. Only as Trinity can God be inclusive subjectivity becoming absolute spirit finally as philosophical concept. We can further spell out these concerns of Hegel's by citing the consequences he draws from the successful, or unsuccessful, establishment of the trinitarian structure for which he so ardently argues. Here we should recall that for Hegel trinitarian divine self-othering and sublation of that otherness is not a simple movement of othering and return. It is, rather, one of progression which is both development and enriched return. It is in this trinitarian self-othering and sublation of that otherness that Hegel recognizes the principle and axis upon which history turns.<sup>33</sup> World history is, for Hegel, a history of God.<sup>34</sup> This trinitarian dialectic is equally the principle of freedom,<sup>35</sup> the reason why God can be the source of community,<sup>36</sup> the reason why God

can be known<sup>37</sup> and the justifying content of Christianity's distinctive truth claims<sup>38</sup> as the religion of absolute subjectivity<sup>39</sup> and freedom.<sup>40</sup> Trinity, the content of the true religion, is divine self-revelation.<sup>41</sup> According to Hegel, without a trinitarian structure to the divine there could be no true reconciliation in Christ.<sup>42</sup> God would, as mentioned, be an empty name, one-sided and finite rather than inclusive and infinite.<sup>43</sup> There could be no truth as mediation for there would be no possibility of a transition from religion, with its true content but representational form, to philosophy where form and content would be identical.

In religion, the overcoming of alienation in reconciliation is realized representationally in the trinitarian God as a movement of divine self-revelation and absolute subjectivity. That same content has for Hegel received its adequate form in philosophical thought. There it is expressed in its necessary movement, namely, as a self-mediation which is the identity of thought and reality, identity and difference or, from another perspective, self and concept.<sup>44</sup> In this sense, Hegel's famous claim in the preface to the *Phenomenology* that the true must be grasped not only as substance but also as subject<sup>45</sup> becomes an appropriate philosophical reformulation of his trinitarian claim. It reiterates his concern not to conceive of God as less than inclusive subject.

Hegel's particular formulation of the concept of inclusive subjectivity meant he had to insist that truth could be mediated only by a content which was seen to be the other of itself and yet, indeed, was ultimately not other than itself.<sup>46</sup> Or again, religiously expressed, in the God-world relationship God must be seen as inclusive of the world. Hegel gave logical expression to this inclusive relationship in his elaboration of the true infinite as the mediation of infinite and finite, and thus as inclusive totality.<sup>47</sup> What he had termed the "bad infinite" (*das Schlecht-Unendliche*) or merely an infinite progression, had to go over into the concept of the true infinite (*wahrhaft Unendliches*), in which the thinking of finitude would result in the transition to the infinite, and vice versa. For Hegel the true infinite is finally, in its speculative formulation, the process of mediation in which the infinite, having become finite, sublates itself as its own difference or finitude into its own self-affirmation. The true infinite is the posited negation of negation.<sup>48</sup> It is identity inclusive of difference, the one inclusive of the many. To be anything less than inclusive would be to remain one-sided and finite.

In the context of the present discussion it is this concept of the true infinite as concrete universal, inclusive totality, or absolute spirit which provides the best access to the systematic religious and philosophical concerns

lying behind Hegel's reconceptualization of Trinity. The true infinite, as a movement from the positive to its negation to the negation of this negation, recalls again how Hegel integrated the positivity of religion, or even positivity in general, into a widened notion of reason. To the Enlightenment mind, positivity had designated a form of particularity which could not be deduced from universal reason. Hegel's definition of difference or otherness as negation allowed him to integrate particularity, as the other of universality, into the overall movement of reason itself.

To recapitulate, Hegel's dialectical and speculative reconceptualization of Trinity was his post-Kantian response to the problem of the one and the many or of the relationship between identity and difference.<sup>49</sup> By means of this reconceptualization Hegel was able to give content to the term "God." In his philosophy of religion, he traced the development of the concept of God through the various religions of the world. That development arrived ultimately, in Christianity, at an explicit understanding of the trinitarian God as absolute subjectivity and subject, with the spiritual community becoming the locus of spirit's self-realization. He saw in the trinitarian divine self-othering and sublation of that otherness a movement of progression which is both development and enriched return, the principle and axis upon which not only the history of religions but history itself turns. World history is then for Hegel the history of God. Freedom was understood ultimately as logically necessary but truly self-determination. Knowledge of God, Christianity's truth claim, and truth itself, were likewise grounded immediately in Hegel's reconceptualization of Trinity as movement of self-determining divine subjectivity. In eliminating the need for a distinction in "immanent" Trinity between divine essence and divine person, Hegel continued the modern turn to the subject. He was able to avoid a Cartesian appeal to God to guarantee truth and certainty in knowledge by making of the trinitarian God the very structure of truth itself. Hegel claimed to recognize in Trinity in general, and in the "inner" or "immanent" Trinity in particular, a congruity with his fundamental, speculatively formulated dialectic of positive/negation/negation of negation. In the Christian doctrine of the Trinity he discovered the means to give religious expression to mediation in the self as concept. This, and especially this latter idea of the self as concept, was his philosophical response to alienation in his time. Hegel might well argue that in the future it would still be this philosophical response, in the form of the true infinite as inclusive totality, which, when appropriately adapted, would prove most fecund for a further reconceptualization of Trinity as the whole truth.

## Friedrich W. J. von Schelling

### *A Radically Free and Personal God*

Schelling (1775–1854) judged Hegel’s philosophy in general and Hegel’s philosophical reconceptualization of Trinity in particular to be too rationalist. Among various objections on Schelling’s part, Hegel did not allow sufficiently for the freedom and the personal nature of God.<sup>1</sup> In reaction to Hegel, Schelling, especially in his later years, used the distinction between what he called negative philosophy (*negative Philosophie*) and positive philosophy (*positive Philosophie*) to critique Hegel’s thought and bring forth his own alternative approach.<sup>2</sup> By negative philosophy Schelling understood transcendental reflection. Such reflection could lead to the idea of God but could never really express that idea and could not capture the reality of existence. For Schelling, Hegel’s philosophy and trinitarian thought constituted a form of merely negative philosophy. But positive philosophy, as Schelling proposed it, recognized the facticity and priorness of being as, in a sense, a given. Positive philosophy thus included philosophy and theology, with the latter’s reference to revelation, in a creative philosophical construction taking into consideration “the un-prethinkable God of Exodus 3:14.”<sup>3</sup> Schelling found in Christianity the affirmation of the just-mentioned facticity and priorness of God as being. In emphasizing this facticity and priorness, he gave his notion of ground an interesting reformulation in the context of his discussion on God.

From this starting point in positive philosophy, Schelling made his philosophically formulated presentation of Trinity the core theme of his

positive philosophy, bringing together trinitarian theological traditions and philosophical reflection. With his reading of Trinity, he in fact laid the speculative foundation for his stress on the radical freedom of God and for his insistence that God is in some way personal from the very beginning of the self-development of God. In so distinguishing himself from what he understood Hegel to have said, Schelling worked out an intriguing interpretation of Trinity. That interpretation focused on the Father as source of trinitarian unity, presented the Son as subordinate to the Father though not a created reality, and envisioned the Holy Spirit as the final reestablishment of the initial divine unity previously disrupted in creation.

### The Radically Free and Personal Trinitarian God

In 1811 and 1813 Schelling had offered a certain trinitarian speculation in *Die Weltalter*.<sup>4</sup> It is, however, in his 1831/32 lectures, published as *Urfassung der Philosophie der Offenbarung* (*Original Version of the Philosophy of Revelation*),<sup>5</sup> that he develops further and in greater detail his positive philosophical presentation of Trinity. Schelling seems to have dictated this *Urfassung*,<sup>6</sup> which will serve as our text of reference.<sup>7</sup> After 1831/32, he continued lecturing on his positive philosophy. For example, his 1841/42 lectures, published as *Philosophie der Offenbarung* (*Philosophy of Revelation*), are particularly well known. They are available in a version published by the theologian, Heinrich Ebehard Gottlob Paulus (1761–1851) during Schelling's lifetime but without his permission. Further versions of Schelling's various lectures on the philosophy of revelation have become available after Schelling's death.<sup>8</sup> These lectures of Schelling's on the philosophy of revelation follow, systematically speaking, upon his lectures on the philosophy of mythology. Together they make up what we might refer to as constituent elements in his philosophy of religion. In the philosophy of mythology Schelling had treated of the world of religion characterized by necessity. Still, the Trinity was already at least implicitly at work in the various religions in an overall movement toward the realm of Christian revelation, a realm characterized by freedom. The key then to understanding Schelling's lectures on the philosophy of religion, and especially his philosophical reconceptualization of Trinity, is the notion and reality of freedom. At crucial points in his lectures Schelling refers to and works with the reality of will in its ability, at least in theory, to decide to act or not to act (for example, 190.23–24).

Schelling's 1831/32 lectures on the philosophy of revelation can be divided into three sections in the following order: opening consideration on creation (lectures 1 to 15); elaboration of a presentation on Trinity (lectures 16 to 30); and, working out of further Christological reflections (lectures 31 to 83).<sup>9</sup> Schelling in effect treats his presentation on Trinity in the second section in two parts: an introduction to the overall role of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity (lectures 16 to 22); and, a focus on his interpretation of the content of the doctrine (lectures 23 to 30). We will limit our immediate review to selected aspects of this focus on content. Malte Dominik Krüger helpfully analyzes this focus on content, seeing Schelling as proceeding there in seven steps. In the first two steps Schelling works to show the way in which God's unity is actual in the freedom of the Father that comes to fruition in the Son. In the third to sixth steps he explains the arising and the result of the generation of the Son through the Father in the Spirit. In the seventh step he affirms that the Creator has become one God in three Persons.

Before entering on the first of these seven steps, Schelling notes that the monotheistic theory to which he had argued in the previous lectures up to and including lecture 22 leads to the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. He then in the first step itself (155.22–159.34),<sup>10</sup> as found in lectures 23 and 24, identifies the immediate point of departure for his constructive interpretation of Trinity as, in Krüger's way of putting it, the unity of God functioning in the freedom of the Father. More specifically, Schelling begins his exposition of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity with a reference to the freedom of God in the creation of the world (155.22–24). In these lectures 23 and 24 Schelling, as can be justified by the complexity of his thought, brings in and makes reference to many elements which he will develop only later on in his presentation of Trinity. However, we will remain with certain more essential moves which he makes here and which structure his further constructive philosophical reflection on Trinity.

In order to affirm the most radical sense of divine freedom Schelling, from the very beginning, asserts the priority and givenness of God's essence as pure being. In God's essence, God is for Schelling pure actuality and unity, so that God as such is absolute subjectivity.<sup>11</sup> He continues from this point, saying that God is the Lord even of being so that God could will either to be or not to be (155.34–156.5). As this pure unity, God presumes no prior potentiality. But unity implies the notion of difference and, thus, the possibility of becoming and development. As this beginning, unity, and source of potential development, God can appropriately be named Father.

So, for Schelling at this stage in his thought on Trinity, Father refers to God as such in his original and potentially originating unity. Since this unity implies difference, there is the potency (*Potenz*) for development and this potency is the first of three potencies which Schelling affirms as residing in God as Father.<sup>12</sup> Here this latter reference to Father is to be taken in a wider sense to refer to what today is often called "immanent" Trinity. Schelling is quick to note that God does not at this point become this and any following potencies, since such an understanding would imply necessity in God. Rather, this first potency and further potencies reveal what God is, namely, the Lord of being. This first potency for further development gives rise to a second potency, which is the potentiality to become real or actual. Thus the second potency is not one which gives rise to but which is given rise to. It is the arising of an essence homogeneous with the first potency but in such a way that it needs to actualize itself. Schelling calls this "giving rise to" generation (*Zeugung*) and refers to this "being given rise to" as generated (*Gezeugte*). This second potency can only be given the name "Son." He brings this, his initial reflection, together with the assertion that these two potencies find their renewed unity in the third and final potency. Already now we can by way of anticipation describe this third potency as the realization, in and through creation, of the actuality of the two first potencies in the renewed unity of being of the Father. Schelling names this final potency Spirit.

This threefold structure at which Schelling arrives will come not only to lay the groundwork for his later affirmation of three Persons in God but also to characterize and underlay his thought on, among various religious themes, Trinity, creation, incarnation, reconciliation, and what we might more traditionally refer to as the Parousia. He is, in his own more systematic way and with a special emphasis on the radical freedom of God, in fact introducing Jakob Boehme (1575–1624), the German mystic's notion of movement in God into his own understanding of God.

In the second step (159.35–164.19), presented in lecture 24, Schelling reiterates that the point of departure, which he has previously indicated as being in the unity of God and freedom of the Father, implies the differentiation of the Son established in the Father. He gives further precision to his presentation of the arising of the Son by distinguishing three perspectives on that arising: the originary form of divine being within the Father; the Son first as for the Father and then as established outside the Father (160.5–11).

From the first perspective, the Son is willed by the Father as the possibility of being outside of the Father though at this point, in referring

to the Son, Schelling is speaking of pure eternity unaffected by temporal considerations. From the second perspective, the Son stands over against the Father. Here Schelling says that the Father is indeed free only in the Son. For it is in willing the Son that the Father intends through the Son to will, in creation, that which is external to the Father. The Father loves the Son as the possibility of this creation. So, the glory of the Father, which is his freedom, is also the glory of the Son who will freely bring into being a world of which the Father will ultimately be Lord. From the third perspective, Schelling spells out the idea that the generation of the Son can only be properly spoken of in relation to the act of creation. It is not a question of the Son being created but rather that, given the will of the Father to create, in and through that creation the Son as second potency begins the process of self-development toward personhood through nature, history, and religion. With these distinctions concerning the arising of the Son, Schelling argues that his philosophical presentation of the arising of the Son assures a notion of eternal generation from the first perspective. And from the third perspective it takes into consideration various trinitarian theological traditions and Scripture. These traditions and Scripture, especially John's Gospel, recognize in the Son one who has received all from the Father and who consequently shows a certain dependence on and subordination to the Father. In his affirmation that the Son becomes person only through self-development in creation, Schelling tries to capture something of the scriptural affirmation of a movement on the part of the Son to hand over all to the Father.

In the third through sixth steps Schelling reflects further on the generation of the Son and its resulting in creation. He explores the arising and the appearance of the Son, with arising referring to the internal relationship within God and appearance, in turn, to the relationship of the world to God. The third step (164.21–167.13) then, in lecture 25, involves, as Krüger<sup>13</sup> puts it, making the internal arising of the Son as image (*Bild*) of the Father plausible. Schelling speaks of the dialectical process of the arising of the Son hidden in the Father. He says that the arising of the Son from originary being involves negation (the Son is not the Father) and being rendered potential (able to develop). The arising of the Son involves especially being posited as non-being, then being. This generation of the Son is more of an exclusion leading to the need for the Son to develop, for the Son is not the original pure being. The Son is that which can be, namely, a potency received from the Father. As such, the Son is selfless self because he does not have his own will. He fulfills the will of the Father.



His essence is thus selfless will. His work is to reveal the will of the Father toward unity. So the Son makes the Father to develop or be actual in the real world, but does not make the Father as such develop or be actual. The Father is, as Krüger puts it, real principle and not an ideal to be actualized.<sup>14</sup>

In the fourth step (167.14–181.29), in lectures 25 to 27, Schelling speaks of the external generation of the Son as the establishment of divinity (*Göttlichkeit*) outside of God. He spells out the continuing process, and then result, of the generation of the Son that takes place in the Son's kenosis, an act and process occurring in, though, and as creation. Here Schelling continues to resist the notion of an eternal generation of the Son. He had discussed this notion in the previous step in his overall presentation on Trinity. He sees it merely as a response to Arius, a response no longer needed (168.2–20). He acknowledges the eternity of the Son as possibility hidden within the Father, whom he identifies with God who is pure being. But he refuses to accept eternal generation on philosophical grounds as well as on the basis of his careful reading of New Testament passages, especially those in the writings of John and Paul. From a philosophical perspective, he asserts that being outside the Father can only be thought with the occurrence of creation, so the beginning of creation is the first moment of true generation and thus of the appearance of the Son outside of God (170.10–13). Parallel to this reference to the beginning of creation, Schelling says the Son will be fully avowed as Son only at the end of creation (171.14–16). He argues as well that eternal generation would mean the Son arises by necessity of the divine nature rather than through the free act of the Father. This would for Schelling not be a true generation since it would lack the spontaneity of freedom. He further says that such a necessary generation would not result in the possibility of development and actualization on the part of the Son. For it is by the Father's will that the Son is obliged to develop and realize his potential to become Person. The Son would in effect be without will, not just his own will but will as such (167.28–29). Schelling complements his philosophical argumentation with an appeal to various New Testament texts in support of his rejection of the notion of eternal generation. He cites, for example, the First Letter of Peter 1:20, where the text does not speak of eternal generation but merely says "he was destined before the foundation of the world." He recalls as well the Letter of Paul to the Ephesians 3:9 and many other places in Pauline texts which refer simply to God's plan and not to an eternal generation (168.36–169.35).<sup>15</sup>

Schelling has used the notion of the Son's generation by the Father to speak of the arising, in God, of the Son as the potency for development

and growth. But it is really in connection with creation that he wishes to speak more properly of the generation of the Son. For it is here that there appears being which is truly other to God and needs to evolve and develop. Schelling notes that it was the intention of the Father already with the internal generation of the Son to give rise to a world external to himself. And it is this appearance of an external world which he identifies at the same time with the generation of the Son, for both result in a form of being external to God the Father. The generation of the Son is both appearance of the world and the Son's appearance in the world. However, we need to qualify this word "identifies" because for Schelling the demiurgic Son internal to the Father is of course the cause of the being of the world (for example, 174.23–26). The Son is the means by which creation occurs. So in creation the Father is cause which remains outside the tension characteristic of the world and the Son is the cosmic cause which brings forth the world and acts in it (176.32–177.1). In this creation as externalization the Father is in effect giving up his divinity in a form of kenosis which begins with creation. And with creation the Son is no longer hidden within the Father. Rather the Son is excluded from the Father. So, for Schelling with this externalization the Son is no longer divine for he is no longer in the Father, who is pure being. This obliges the Son to develop on his own and to work to bring the world back to God. He is at work in the world, slowly reestablishing its unity with the Father. In this work the Son reveals to the world not his own but the Father's will, which he has received from the Father. As Schelling has already mentioned in a more speculative formulation, the Son has received this will from the Father and indeed received all that he is. So the Son is a selfless self. Schelling is picking up on various New Testament references which would seem at least at first reading to imply a certain subordination of the Son to the Father. By way of example, we can cite his noting the New Testament reference to the Father as  $\acute{\omicron}$  Θεός and to the Son merely as Θεός without the definite article (168.22–27).

Schelling knows quite well various trinitarian traditions. He furthers his argument by claiming that the error on the part of the Arians, for example, was to say that the Son was created. So the Son has his being only outside of God, which Schelling of course denies. The Arians had drawn the wrong conclusion when they thought that what Schelling describes as the Son's loss of divinity at the moment of creation meant the Son was created. Rather, for Schelling what really happened was that the Son emptied out his divinity with creation and then, as potency, must regain this divinity (178.27–179.4). The Arians mistook what was only a momentary

characteristic of the Son for a generally applicable understanding of the Son as such (179.16–18). Schelling also faults the more orthodox theological position, which for him excludes the Son's existence outside God before the Incarnation. In this position the focus was on the moment of the Son's divinity to the exclusion of the Son's role in creation. In so doing, according to Schelling this orthodox theological position simply denies Arianism and therewith accepts the alternatives Arianism proposes rather than finding a way to incorporate the Arian position into and subsume it under a wider or more inclusive position (179.32–180.5). Schelling argues that only his own more complex position can avoid the pitfalls in these two positions.<sup>16</sup>

In the fifth step, worked out in lectures 27 to 28 (181.30–189.34), Schelling conceives of human consciousness as, in Krüger's way of phrasing it, the external result of the generation of the Son. Though the generation of the Son gives rise to creation as such, human consciousness will be the ultimate level, so to speak, at which the drama of reconciliation between God as pure being and the loss of that being in the externalization of creation will take place.

Schelling begins<sup>17</sup> what we identify as the fifth step in his trinitarian theological presentation by noting that the Son has been posited in existence outside God in an overall negative and suffering relationship. Schelling will come back to this subject and the others treated in this fifth step at much greater length later on in the lectures. But for now he provides a summary of what he will say then concerning the way in which the Son brings about creation's reconciliation with God the Father. He immediately notes that at the end of creation the Son should have arrived at fully realized glory (*Herrlichkeit*) and this as his own particular personhood (*Persönlichkeit*). With this remark Schelling indicates that the reconciliation begun by the Son from the moment of creation on is disrupted by human sinfulness in turning away from the unification being brought about by the Son. So the Son must begin a new creation in his appearance as an individual human being. But even this interruption of the Son's glorification does not hinder the final outcome of the Son's work in the world.

Then Schelling takes up another point for further philosophical reflection. He acknowledges that the glorification of the Son in this new creation is, with the resurrection, a full glorification before the Father but not before the world. The Son overcomes the second self-emptying but has not as yet arrived at the full glorification which is the goal of creation as such and will only come about at the end of things. For this to occur, both the Son's and the Father's glorification has to become evident and known

to human consciousness. But God as such, the Father, remains outside the world. Indeed Schelling will stress this divine otherness by describing it as otherworldly (*außerweltliche*), superworldly (*überweltliche*), superactual (*überwirkliche*), and outside that which is actual (*äußerwirkliche*) cause (183.12–21). Throughout the process of creation's move to its end the Son is not the fully actualized Son. He is this first when he has completely overcome his own potency which excludes divinity. Only at this point is the true will of the Father revealed, which is to overcome externally posited non-being in the renewed and fuller realization of the fullness of being. The Father is fully revealed only when he is present to the self, to and in human consciousness, as the fullness of being he is. As is for Schelling so clear in John's Gospel, this revelation only takes place when Father and Son are, together, fully actualized as divine Persons.

Creation's goal is the external glory of the Father become immanent in creation through its recognition in human consciousness. Schelling sees the fact that the Father is not externally glorified without the Son being so glorified, and vice versa, in John's statement of Christ's prayer that the Father would glorify the Son so that the Son might also glorify the Father. This is then a mutual glorification in which both are in possession of the true being of the Father. In the end, all of creation will, through human consciousness, be aware of the fullness of being which the Father was from the beginning. Both Father and Son will have equal right to this finally established being, and this is the final unity of Father and Son. The realization of this shared possession of being in and through its revelation to human consciousness is the goal and purpose of creation. It is Paul's good news.

Schelling reinforces his remarks in this fifth step and brings them to a conclusion with his interpretation of Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 15:24–28 (186.5–189.34). As he notes, these verses have proven difficult to interpret. We can loosely paraphrase several elements of his translation of these verses: when Christ has submitted all to himself, he will hand over the kingdom to God, who will be all in all (186.5–18). He finds that these verses support his position and, in discussing them, he further clarifies aspects of that position. First of all, he identifies the kingdom with being, which the Father had given over to the Son. The role of the Son is to transform this being, which is external to God, into divine being. Since this transformation is ongoing, handing over the kingdom to God does not imply that the Son gives up his Lordship. The Father's receiving the re-divinized being from the Son is the beginning of the Father's now having this being in common with the Son. Second, Schelling notes that for Paul the Son retains direct

Lordship over the kingdom until all enemies have been overcome, when all that is ungodly in being has been overcome. This is the point at which the Son's exclusionary Lordship over being outside of God ends and the Lordship over being is common to Father and Son. Third, Schelling argues, in part on the basis of his interpretation of *ἐν το πᾶν*, that God's being all in all does not mean the disappearance of the Son's Lordship. Rather now it is common with that of the Father. At this point each potency, as person, is the whole divinity. For Schelling the Greek phrase means all in all, not all in one. With this remark he opens the way to his further trinitarian reflection. After a brief recapitulation of what he has said so far, he argues that what was heretofore in itself that of the Father is now the Son's as well. But this sharing of being in itself cannot as such be accomplished by the Son, whose role is to develop and actualize. It can only be accomplished by a third potency, namely, that of the Holy Spirit, which goes out from the Father and the Son as final potency. To emphasize the importance of this point, Schelling ends this step in his presentation by insisting that this is a necessary assertion.

In the sixth step (189.35–192.6), in lecture 28, Schelling justifies his assertion that the Holy Spirit is the inner result of the Father's generation of the Son, that is, active in nature and especially in human consciousness. The Father's willing the tension between his own divine being and the being of the world is not only a negation of the Son's divine being within the Father but also that of the Spirit. The Spirit's being is mediated through the Son. This mediated negation of the Spirit's divine being helps appreciate the fact that in the New Testament the Spirit does not work immediately and forcefully. Rather, the Spirit urges, incites, and prompts prophets to speak out and individual persons to establish, perhaps better, reestablish the world and themselves in divine being (190.5–16). Schelling indicates three sides to what the Spirit does. They are the role of demiurgic potency working with the Son in the creation of a tension between divine being and the being of the world, the role of cosmic potency in the development of creation, and the role of unifying the Father and Son in their glorification at the end of time. At this last moment the Spirit becomes fully individualized divine person (190.19–21).

It is especially interesting to note that Schelling insists on the role of the Spirit in the realm of nature. He says that we can recognize this activity in nature wherever we discern any even very subtle indication of free will within the necessity characteristic of nature, what he refers to as the breath (*Hauch*) of the Spirit (for example, 190.28–29). Here Schelling draws his

listeners' attention to such phenomena as, more generally speaking, goal-oriented functioning. More specifically, he refers to the actions of animals and the singing of birds as well as the very multiplicity of forms arising in nature by chance and caprice. He calls particular attention to the notion of play (*Spiel*) found even within the limits which seem to be established within nature in given circumstances (190.31–191.4). Schelling does, however, seem to qualify his remarks by saying that whatever is not attributable to chance and caprice alone is of the all-ensouling Spirit (191.4–6). In all of this, the Spirit does not directly work things out in nature but, so to speak, interweaves his action in and through the course of nature. Again, Schelling draws attention to New Testament remarks concerning the notion of a creator Spirit and, indeed, a Spirit which is holy because it is without comparison (191.15–21).

This Spirit can only come fully upon us with the glorification of the Father which, in turn, can only come through the glorification of the Son. Here Schelling recalls various sayings in John's Gospel to this effect. If Christ does not go, the Spirit will not come upon the disciples. In so doing, namely, coming upon the disciples, the Spirit as we will see becomes fully divine Person bringing together in human consciousness the glory of the Father and the Son (191.21–192.6).

In the seventh step (192.7–213.18), in lectures 28 to 30, Schelling provides what Krüger calls the decisive insight into the doctrine of the Trinity, namely, that human seeking after the free origin of actual being finds its answer in God in three Persons. At the end of lecture 28, Schelling provides a summary (192.7–193.14) of the results of his reflection so far before continuing the development of his thought on Trinity in lectures 29 and 30. He says we have arrived at the point where God as a whole has become actual in three different Persons, with each one being the whole God, as he phrases it. Much of the rest of Schelling's summary deserves being cited at greater length, especially considering our interest in carrying out a careful and somewhat detailed reading of his thought:

The Father . . . is now . . . the whole God, where he possesses the Son and Spirit brought back into his own being. The Son is no longer the potency of the Son . . . he is the whole God. This must equally be the case with the Spirit. So . . . the purest act, the actual self, is re-established, only with the difference . . . that the three forms are now three personalities . . . three *different* names of the same *absolute* personality. The three personalities

are not different Gods; for the essence, the substance, is always the same. . . . And yet they are not merely three different terms or three different subjective views of one and the same God, but rather they are three objective differences. . . . During each of the processes, each potency was for itself independent. This independence is not lost in the unity. Each one returns into the unity with its own subjective character. This is the highest expression of the idea of Trinity. (192.22–193.10)<sup>18</sup>

After this summary of where his trinitarian reflection has led, Schelling continues to spell out his understanding of Trinity by insisting that the three divine Persons are not parts of God. To help us understand this he employs the notion of moment (*Moment*) and speaks of three necessary moments in the development of the doctrine. The first of these is what he calls *Tautousie*, a position stressing the moment of essential or substantial unity (195.7–196.17). This moment corresponds to Schelling's notion of initial divine unity. God as a whole is, through his will, the cause of the tension between divine being and creation. In creation the divine unity remains, so that here we have what is referred to as Sabellianism, according to which there is only one personality. So God as Father in the Old Testament takes on, in the New Testament, the name of Son in human form and the name of Spirit as coming down upon the Apostles. Older theologians set this understanding of God, moment as Schelling describes it, over against that of Arianism, which latter exaggerated the notion of difference in the divine.

Schelling then calls the second necessary moment in the scientific development of the doctrine of the Trinity *Heterousie*, necessary if a merely nominal form of divine unity is to be avoided. He identifies it with the second moment in his own trinitarian presentation, in which the three potencies develop into independent divine Persons (196.18–200.7). Here, if we do not think in terms of three potencies which develop outside God as Persons, we end up, on one hand, either with merely three names or ways in which the One works or, on the other hand, a tritheism of three Gods—one essence or three essences. The former position says too little and the latter too much. Schelling notes, however, that if he had to choose between the two he would choose to say too much. For without affirming true difference nothing would finally be explained. Affirming three Gods involves thinking in terms of a species and three individuals as, for example, when we think of humankind and three individual human beings. In this basic position of *Heterousie*, what is lacking is the appropriate affirmation of

the unity of the three divine Persons who cannot be thought one without the other. Schelling draws attention to the fact that, in the third moment which he himself will present, the difference stated so strongly in this second moment is truly a super-substantial one. This clarification leads him to a consideration of the third necessary moment in the scientific development of the doctrine of the Trinity.

This third moment Schelling names *Homousie*. He identifies it with his own affirmation of the reconstituted divine unity now rooted in the interpersonal relations among the three divine Persons (201.7–203.33). He insists that, without the moment of *Heterousie* and its insistence on differentiation of the potencies developing as Persons, there would be no such third, culminating moment. There must be a moment in which the potencies exist in the context of the tension between divine being and the non-being of creation. This moment of tension makes it possible for each potency to develop its own characteristics and, as fully God, to bring them into the renewed unity of God. That which is substantial then is exposed in each Person in a particular way. The Trinity, in this its highest moment, can only be posited and grasped in connection with creation. Here Schelling introduces the notion of economy and in effect the idea of the “economic” Trinity. He draws attention to this existence of the potencies of the Son and of the Spirit outside of God and has regularly noted the difficulty theologians have encountered in distinguishing appropriately between Father and Son. However we describe this relationship, he insists that at all costs we must defend the freedom of the Father to be outside, so to speak, of the Son and to posit the Son outside of himself. Only in this way will the Trinity itself be a living, dynamic reality.

With the 30th lecture (204.1–213.18) Schelling brings to a close the seventh and final step in his presentation on Trinity as well as that presentation as a whole. He reflects further on the questions of divine and human freedom, of creation and the role of the three potencies in it, of the order among them and their relations to time, of divine glorification and the fact that we do not yet experience it in fullness. He ends the lecture with three questions concerning human beings. He will return to these questions in his more Christologically focused reflections that will follow upon his presentation on Trinity. In this lecture it is as if Schelling has hit full stride. He speaks more clearly and directly, providing helpful triadically structured summaries from time-to-time during his discussion. To profit from his succinct and careful phrasing, we will more closely paraphrase what he actually says in our own recounting of these summaries.



Schelling opens the lecture by insisting on the importance of the indissoluble bond between Father and Son. But he again recalls that this unity must not be conceived in such a way as to deny or restrict the Father's and Son's freedom, for it is only through this freedom that the idea of the Trinity can become lively and actual. He moves on to consider human freedom and to assert an important distinction between those who live in peace with God and those who do not. For the latter, those who are not reconciled with God, God cannot really be God. So such persons are Godless. God exists as God only in the perfected person, and exists in the Godless person as well, but not as God (204.1–205.4). With these remarks Schelling prepares the way later on in the lecture for further reflections on human freedom.

Presently Schelling continues with a consideration of the roles of the three potencies in creation and its further development from the initial tension among the three potencies to the resolution of this tension at the end of things. He acknowledges that theologians insist God works as one in creation. Yet he in turn strongly insists that each of the divine potencies plays a specific role in creation while, as the same essence, working together. For him the Creator is inseparably one, but he is Creator only in the tension of the potencies, through each of which the Creator works differently. "He must be thought in the potency of the Father as the one who comes forth as excluding being—in the potency of the Son as the one who overcomes excluding Being—in the potency of the Spirit as the one who confirms and completes being" (205.19–23).<sup>19</sup> In each potency, the subsequently divine Person does in each and every work what the others do not do. Yet the potencies and the divine Persons into which they develop must, in creation and especially in its accomplishment, be thought of in relation to one another.

We can say that in creation the Father hands over the material for creation, which the Son then brings into creational form while the Spirit brings this form to be what it should be and completes it. For Schelling these ways of acting represent one and the same will while at the same time representing differing wills. He says that his position here coincides with that of Basil the Great, who identified the Father as the cause providing that out of which creation occurs, material causality. Schelling refers to the Son as the properly effecting and creating cause, formal causality, and to the Spirit as perfecting and completing cause, final causality (205.4–207.2). Interestingly, Schelling does not refer explicitly to efficient causality though he does speak of the Son and Spirit as demiurgic.

At this point Schelling appeals to the New Testament prepositional structure of the relationship between Father, Son, and Spirit to further ground his understanding of God as Creator and even of his way of relating the three divine Persons to one another. He cites especially most of Romans 11:36, which he renders as “from him and through him and to him are all things.” Or in Greek: “ἐξ αὐτοῦ καὶ δι’ αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν τὰ πάντα.”<sup>20</sup> He sees these three prepositions as giving expression to the cause of creation, and even to the relationship among the potencies become divine Persons, as beginning, middle, and completion. In their unity they are the nature of God who is the three causes without losing the unity of his essence. For Schelling, as the Spirit is the final cause of the whole God, of the Father and the Son, so the Son is the nearest (*nächste*) final cause of the Father. Again, in view of the Son all from the Father is directed to the Son and Spirit, and in view of the Father and the Son all is directed to the Spirit. These patterns apply to all that God does (207.2–208.7).

Working again with the notion of being, Schelling recalls that the Father is the whole God in that all being is in him and the Son is the whole God in that he has mastery of being and the Spirit is the whole God in that he has mastery of being in as it arises from Father and Son, reconciled being. From this Schelling concludes that we must conceive of the three potencies as three successive masters or rulers of being in line with temporal succession. The time before creation is that of the Father, the time of excluding power, a form of pastness. The time of creation is that of the Son, the present time of actual creation and the great ages of the world (*Weltzeit*). The Father was before all time, the Son the personality ruling during creation and the Spirit the future and last ruler of fulfilled creation as return to the beginning. In all of this the glory of the Father and of the Son comes to fullness in the glory of the Spirit. The glory of the Father and of the Son, and consequently the Father and the Son themselves, are not surpassed but continue therein. What John had said regarding the completion of divine immanence in the human person is applicable to all of creation (208.15–211.19).<sup>21</sup> So “the day of glory is the day of common glorification” (211.18–19).<sup>22</sup>

Toward the end of lecture 30 Schelling acknowledges that this full glorification has not yet taken place. Divine being appears to have been suspended, so to speak. For example, we see only a monotonous cycle in nature. Schelling refers to the Second Letter of Peter 3:8 and speaks of God’s patience in wanting all to work through the freely willed conversion

of human beings to God. Human beings are the cause of this new suspension of the movement toward divine being. The situation can be remedied only through a new creational move on the part of the Son and the goal of reestablished communal divine unity achieved through humans. But this movement is again hindered by humans' suspension of divine working in the world (211.20–212.17).

At this point, Schelling says this resistance on the part of free human beings leads us to pose three questions which he will work to answer in his Christological reflections following his presentation on Trinity. The first question concerns the role of human beings in distinction from the rest of creation. The second is about humans' hindering the process of movement toward divine being. The third treats of changes brought about in the relationship of humans to the cosmic potencies of the world once it exists, to the potencies among themselves, and to God (212.17–212.30). Already, here at the end of the lecture, Schelling takes up the first of these three questions in preliminary fashion. He notes that the potencies are at their most negative and distant from one another at the beginning of creation and its movement toward its goal. As they come closer to one another, that which was original divine being becomes more of a joint or shared being. And so in this process creation develops more of a relationship to God. At the end of this process of overcoming tension among the potencies, sublated divinity enters into the human being and is immanent therein (212.31–213.18). Schelling ends the lecture with a description of this entry of full divinity as Trinity into and as object of human consciousness with a picture-like remark: "The ray of divinity, which enters obliquely in all other creatures enters vertically in humans so that they are divinized creation" (213.15–18).<sup>23</sup>

### What Schelling Has Done

We have spent slightly more time on Schelling's constructive philosophical reading of Trinity since it is less well-known in the English-speaking world, especially in its original version of 1831–32. Here we see Schelling adventurously working out his presentation on Trinity within the context of his overall positive philosophy, including his philosophy of mythology and his philosophy of revelation. He has in his own unique way proposed to affirm at the same time both the radical freedom and the personal character of God. He does this by insisting that God develops from an initial unity in the Father, including three potencies, to three divine Persons who, in their

interaction through the Spirit, together glory in renewed and enriched divine unity. For Schelling this development takes place in and through creation, culminating in the free recognition by human persons that God is one God in three divine Persons. The three Persons are characterized by their ongoing, varied lordship of being, by spontaneity, free movement of will, and shared final glory. What for others might be a sign of dependence and lack of autonomy, namely, God's self-development in and through creation, is for Schelling the very means by which God exercises God's own freedom and reveals divine personhood becoming tri-personal. Indeed, Schelling has proposed an understanding of Trinity in which he affirms both that the three potencies are present in each work and that there is a temporal succession to their presence to and in creation as a whole.

Of particular note is the way in which Schelling gives a philosophical reading of various Scriptural texts and of various orthodox, or less orthodox, trinitarian traditions. With regard to Scripture, he takes somewhat more literally various texts regarding, for example, the relationship between the Son and the Father. In some of these texts there is an at least apparent tendency to emphasize the Son's dependence on the Father with regard to the Son's divinity. Schelling puts this dependence front and center, whereas many early trinitarian thinkers interpreted such texts within the context of and under the influence of their wider concern to affirm the equal divinity of the three divine Persons. With regard to earlier trinitarian and quasi-trinitarian traditions, he argues that we can really come to terms especially with those traditions which are not fully trinitarian when we see them as constituent moments in a full understanding of Trinity.

In that full understanding of Trinity, as he presents it, Schelling works with a good number of basic themes or notions which, in listing some of them, help us recall the rich complexity of his trinitarian thought. Among these basic themes we should mention being, facticity, positivity, ground, unity, freedom, will, spontaneity, potency, creation, revelation, nature, history, religion, personhood, and spirit.<sup>24</sup> Yet, complex as that thought and numerous as these themes may be, he still seems to understand these various notions in a rather literal way and perhaps even to apply them univocally to God and world.



We have referred more tangentially to Fichte's thought and dwelt at greater length on Hegel's and Schelling's Idealist trinitarian thought. It would

perhaps be helpful to note again that Hegel himself had argued that his own thinking on the notion and movement of spirit was the culmination of a movement more immediately from Descartes and his emphasis on the thinking "I" to Kant with his idea of categories on to Fichte and his effort to deduce the categories from an initial "I."<sup>25</sup> Surely Schelling considered himself, at least in his later thought, as having continued and corrected that longer trajectory beyond Hegel. Now he places greater stress on will. He makes explicit reference to facticity as starting point in positive philosophy and, consequently, to what we would surely today, in somewhat more complex formulation bringing together "subjective" and "objective," call experience.

Hegel and Schelling each saw their systematic presentations as the culmination of a long philosophical development. It would perhaps not be unfair to say that Hegel's thought in general, and in particular on Trinity, moves from possibility to actuality to necessity. And that Schelling's thought, especially on Trinity, moves from initial pure actuality to potentiality to realization of that potentiality in renewed actuality. It has been said that in their trinitarian positions Hegel represents a somewhat more modalist understanding of Trinity while Schelling borders on tritheism.<sup>26</sup> Hegel would of course claim that he is simply presenting the true content of Trinity as a movement of inclusive divine subjectivity and Schelling would argue that without real difference there would be no progress or development.

Following, then, upon Fichte's early initial insights into the triadic structure of subjectivity, Hegel and Schelling have each worked out an inclusive philosophical theology or philosophy of God. Each in his own way characterizes God as a dynamically developing, triadically structured movement occurring in and through history, which has become the history of God. This movement toward a unity of human and divine brings the human into the divine and the divine into the human, enriching both. Hegel and Schelling have each pushed this notion of the development of God considerably beyond what more orthodox traditional trinitarian thinking has embraced. Together and individually, they have indeed pushed the philosophico-theological envelope and in so doing have consequently had a considerable influence and resultant impact on later trinitarian thinkers. They have brought forward enriching trinitarian insights as well as serious challenges, especially in the ways in which they spell out divine development or becoming.

We would do well to recall what Karl Barth once wrote in evaluating Hegel and his thought: "A great problem and a great disappointment,

but perhaps also a great promise.”<sup>27</sup> This could surely be said of Schelling as well.<sup>28</sup> Depending on our philosophical and theological perspectives, we might or might not agree with problem and disappointment, but Barth was certainly a prophet when he spoke of promise regarding Hegel on Trinity and, we could say, by extension regarding Schelling on Trinity as well.



PART 2

---

EARLY EUROPEAN TESTIMONIALS  
TO IDEALIST INFLUENCE





## Introduction to Part 2

Hegel's overall presentation of the dialectical development of trinitarian divine subjectivity and Schelling's daring proposal of a dynamic trinitarian God developing from three divine potencies into three divine persons have appeared to many who have studied their thought to be quite impressive, even in certain aspects persuasive. It would be hard to delimit Hegel's and Schelling's at least indirect, but often quite direct, influence on nineteenth-century as well as twentieth- and twenty-first-century trinitarian thought. This impact should come as little surprise in view of the insight, industry, and intention toward inclusiveness with which especially Hegel, but certainly also Schelling, have in their trinitarian thinking handled so many universal themes of ongoing human and religious importance. Without trying to be comprehensive, we could list the following themes surfacing especially in their treatments of Trinity: subjectivity and personhood; spontaneity; freedom; alienation; spirit; history; universality and particularity; community; infinity; revelation; being as becoming; spirit; and, experience and knowledge of God. Of particular importance, Hegel and Schelling have each in his own way introduced the notion of history into their very understandings of God, who, in a form of becoming, develops into divine fullness in and through history.

In this part 2 we will take a look at several witnesses who give testimonials, in thought developed and word written, to the influence and resultant impact of German Idealist thinking on trinitarian thought during the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> We will leave consideration of that influence on twentieth- and twenty-first-century trinitarian thinkers for parts 3 and 4. It will be somewhat more challenging to identify such influence on these later thinkers, especially given their distance in time and, later on, in place as well from the German Idealists. Happily, nineteenth-century trinitarian thinkers have themselves often referred to and explicitly expounded at some length

on German Idealist thought. Such explicit reference will make it easier to identify their creative dependence on post-Kantian German Idealists in their overall trinitarian thinking and on the ways in which they structure what they see as a dynamic and developmental relationship between divine and human.

We will then in the present part 2 of our study trace the influence especially of Hegel and Schelling on selected nineteenth-century trinitarian thinkers who exemplify Idealist influence in their understandings of Trinity. Hegel's influence on trinitarian thought is generally better known in the West than that of the later Schelling. So, while not neglecting that of Hegel, we will tend to focus slightly more on Schelling's influence as we turn now to several nineteenth-century trinitarian thinkers. In reviewing selected aspects of their thought, we will at times note specific ways in which they rejected or, from their perspectives, corrected various positions taken by Hegel and Schelling. But our focus will remain on the more positive influence and impact of Idealist thinking on the trinitarian thought of these selected thinkers.

We should recall that the nineteenth century saw considerable study of Trinity and related questions. There were of course those who tended to concentrate more on classical Thomist and Augustinian as well as Reformation approaches to Trinity. Others picked up on and worked with what was for them more recent Idealist interpretations of Trinity. In either case, with the arrival of Idealist thought those reflecting on Trinity could not easily avoid dealing with a whole host of new or at least newly phrased questions about God. Samuel M. Powell has noted a series of such questions: "Questions about God's self-consciousness and actuality. Does God become? If so, does God become actual through a relation with the cosmos? Is God free? Is the cosmos an element of God's being? Is God's knowledge of the cosmos an act of self-consciousness? In what sense is God personal? Does personality imply finitude?"<sup>2</sup>

We will concentrate on the influence and resultant impact of Idealist thought on three nineteenth-century thinkers who have entered more directly into dialogue with Idealist approaches to Trinity. In their constructive reflection they have witnessed to, and indeed provided testimonials concerning, the post-Kantian German Idealist trinitarian legacy already evident to some extent from early on in the nineteenth century. Philipp Marheineke was in his later thought truly enamored of Hegelian ideas. Much farther along in the century Isaak August Dorner worked critically and constructively with the thought of both Hegel and Schelling. Vladimir Sergeyevich Solovyov

was a creative and autonomous Orthodox thinker who wrote directly of Idealist thinkers and whose trinitarian thought has a strong Idealist ring to it. We will survey their trinitarian thought, less so that of Marheineke but more so that of Dorner and especially of Solovyov, in somewhat greater detail since they are perhaps less well-known and since they represent first efforts to work with Idealist approaches to understanding Trinity. As first efforts, their constructive reflection on Trinity mirrors, though the word is perhaps a bit too strong, quite directly and explicitly various directions taken by Idealist philosophers.



## Philipp Marheineke

### *A Trinitarian Dialectic of Being and Thought*

Marheineke (1780–1846) was Hegel's friend and colleague in the Theological Faculty of the University of Berlin.<sup>1</sup> He was particularly well known in Hegelian circles as editor of the 1832 First Friends Edition of Hegel's works. He himself edited the 1832 version of Hegel's lectures on the philosophy of religion. Marheineke was influenced more by Schelling in the first edition of his *Die Grundlehren der christlichen Dogmatik*,<sup>2</sup> published in 1819, but he turned to Hegel as resource and special source of inspiration in his second edition, *Die Grundlehren der christlichen Dogmatik als Wissenschaft*,<sup>3</sup> published in 1827. It may well be that these theological studies, especially that of 1819, influenced Hegel himself as he developed a more explicitly trinitarian structure for the Christian or consummate religion in his lectures on the philosophy of religion.<sup>4</sup> We will, however, concentrate on Marheineke's more often cited second edition where he is said to have converted to Hegel's overall philosophical reading of Trinity while working to remain faithful to ecclesial trinitarian terminology and traditions. In briefly reviewing Marheineke's mediating position,<sup>5</sup> we will refer to several representative sections of Marheineke's presentation on Trinity. These references will permit us to appreciate his interweaving of Idealist and more traditional trinitarian terminology. Our focus especially on terminology will provide us with a key to understanding the extent to which Idealist thought, namely, that of Hegel but also Schelling, was a considerable influence on the way in which Marheineke developed his understanding of Trinity.

## Marheineke on Trinity

As is the case with so many trinitarian thinkers, and especially those influenced by German Idealism, Marheineke's thought as a whole forms the context in which he works out his understanding of Trinity. It is in this wider context that he spells out presuppositions to that understanding as well as ways in which he continues to work it out in further reflections on Christian doctrine and life. For present purposes, however, we will be able to concentrate primarily on selected sections of his explicit presentation on Trinity. The fact that he developed the core of his trinitarian thought in relatively brief sections of his study will permit a briefer review of his trinitarian thought.<sup>6</sup>

Marheineke treats directly of the Trinity in his study's third part, entitled "On God as Spirit" (*Von Gott, dem Geist*).<sup>7</sup> He opens this third part with more general remarks concerning God as spirit in article § 413. To paraphrase what he says as he interweaves Idealist and more traditional theological terminology, we can say that God is not only absolute, substantial being and not only absolute thinking but also thinking substance and substantial thinking. God is equally object and subject, and so spirit. As spirit, then, God is the truly actual essence and, herewith, active. The actual being of God as spirit in itself is the unity of Spirit with Father and Son, and so God is therein Trinity. Spirit, as active being for itself, is its being for others and, thus, the principle of power and movement in the world as the Spirit of Grace. God's actual and active being or God's being in- and for-itself in human nature is the establishment of the spiritual community as the community of God in it. On the basis of these three considerations, he divides the third part of his *Dogmatics* into three subsections, in which he treats respectively of Trinity, the working of grace, and the Kingdom of God.

Now in the first subsection of the third part of the *Dogmatics*, Marheineke moves to sketch out in several numbered articles his rather dense understanding of Trinity as such. In § 422, he identifies the God of the Christian religion as the Trinity presented in representational form as Father, Son, and Spirit. The first moment is the pure being of God in itself, in God's substantiality, and is not as such to be thought. Here that which relates itself to God is an other than that to which it relates itself. We have then a mutual negation one of the other. The Father is not the Son, and the Son is not the Father. Each one is the negation of the other, and both are over against one another. Through this negative power of differentiation God mediates God with Godself. When God is seen as mere

identity, as being, we end up with pantheism and God is in this case not considered as thought. However, in the Christian representation there is reason, reasoning being, *logos*.

Marheineke continues to fill in his presentation in the following articles. In § 423 he again speaks of the moments of God in which God is being in itself and being for itself. In the eternal mediation of these two, as he puts it, God is spirit. The mutual negation of being in itself, the being of the Father, and being out of itself, the being of the Son, is the negation of this negation and thus their positive positing. Here we have to do with identity and difference. God is neither the self-identical absolute and selfless substance nor the absolute self or subject in its difference from substance. In God's so being known, God is the identity of identity and difference, Trinity. In this actuality of God as Spirit, the being of the Father and of the Son is contained and sublated. In § 424 Marheineke continues with a remark to the effect that Father ("being in itself," *Insichselberseyn*) and Son ("being outside itself," *Aussichselberseyn*) are Spirit in that each has the being, so to speak, of the Spirit, but there is only one Spirit. The Spirit goes out from Father and Son, an origin which not only qualifies the Spirit's relation to Father and Son but also the Spirit's relation to the world. In § 425 he turns to the notion of love. Here he affirms that in its form as "for itself" (*Fürsichseyn*) the divine Spirit is knowing and, as this "for itself," is for the other. The Father is then for the Son and the Son for the Father. As this being one for the other and in the other, the Spirit is love. Each is eternal love for the other. And as love for others, each is love for the world. The Spirit is this love of the Father and the Son for the world, whether in creation or in the sending of the Son. The Spirit carries out this love through revelation in humans and their consciousness. Humans in turn give expression to this love in their relations with one another. So, as Marheineke indicates in § 426, true religion, whose content is the unity of God as Father, Son, and Spirit, is the work of the Spirit in the faith and subsequent further reflection as knowing in and through human consciousness. It is not the result of human effort but the movement of God in and through that human consciousness.

### An Early Testimonial to Idealist Influence

In these selected references to Marheineke's trinitarian thought we can see, for example, in his regular reference to Father, Son, and Spirit how



determined he is, on the one hand, to retain certain basic terms common to various Christian trinitarian theological traditions. He speaks, again, of the love of Father and Son for the world whereas in Hegel, at least, it would have been more appropriate to speak of God's love for the world rather than intimate the possibility of Father and Son each loving the world.<sup>8</sup> At the same time, on the other hand, we can hardly avoid recognizing his constantly working with a number of terms and ideas clearly taken from Hegel. We need only think, for example, of Marheineke's regular reference to knowing or his use of "in itself," "for [outside] itself," and the sublation of these two in the Spirit.

Though Marheineke works so much with Hegelian terms and dynamics, his positing of an initial moment of being which is prior to thought is quite foreign to Hegel, who presented being as the being of thought and first thought determination in his science of logic.<sup>9</sup> Marheineke tries to bring being and thought together. Still, his constant reference to being, and especially to a first moment of being before thought, harkens back rather to Schelling. Marheineke's references to Schelling (being) may well then be at least in part the result of his effort to remain coherent with more orthodox trinitarian theological traditions. But they would as well, at least to some extent, seem to be a continuing indication of his earlier attachment to the thought of Schelling. That Marheineke spoke more fundamentally of knowing rather than willing clearly throws him into the Hegelian camp. Still he may, perhaps not fully self-consciously, be mediating not only between more orthodox traditions and Hegel but also between Hegel and Schelling. Indeed, Marheineke's notion, namely, that the action of the Spirit as revelation occurs in and through human consciousness, is congenial to and compatible with the thought of both Hegel and Schelling.

In the end, Marheineke seemed neither to satisfy philosophers nor theologians. From the philosophical side Falk Wagner has criticized him for falling back behind the critical approach already established in Idealism.<sup>10</sup> And from the theological side Karl Barth referred to the Marheineke of the second edition of the *Dogmatics* as one who wanted to give theology its due but who in the final analysis succumbed to the wiles and temptations of philosophy.<sup>11</sup> It remains, however, the case that Marheineke exemplifies in testimonial a major early effort to work theologically with insights and dynamics around a variety of themes and understandings of them which Hegel and Schelling had introduced systematically into reflection on the notion of God as Trinity. Among these themes and their dynamically structured interrelationships we can list being and thought, identity and dif-

ference, becoming, negation and integration, and spirit.<sup>12</sup> In his effort to rethink Trinity creatively, Marheineke drew inspiration especially from Hegel but also perhaps from Schelling.



## Isaak August Dorner

### *An Ethical Trinity*

Dorner (1809–1884) published the first volume of his important study, *A System of Christian Doctrine*,<sup>1</sup> in 1879. By that time he had already for a number of years held the prestigious Chair in Theology at the University of Berlin previously occupied by Schleiermacher. Dorner will be of particular interest since he brought into this trinitarian thought elements from both Hegel and Schelling, while showing as well in his own thought similarities to that of Schleiermacher and Kant. Indeed, we can already now say that it was Dorner who, in his thought on Trinity, mediated at least to a certain extent Idealist thinking on Trinity to twentieth-century theologians. Pannenberg has, for example, described him as “the most important champion of an essential Trinity in Protestant theology during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.”<sup>2</sup> Though Barth was quite appreciative of Dorner’s effort to say something new and to let theology be theology, he claimed that as a speculatively developed position Dorner’s theology represented more the thinking of the 1840s than that of the 1870s. In fact, six years before the appearance of Dorner’s own *System* Albrecht Ritschl had already published his monumental study, *Justification and Reconciliation*. With Ritschl there had already come a shift in theology from metaphysics toward historical studies, which latter were in fact carried out in an increasingly Neo-Kantian philosophical context.<sup>3</sup>

Dorner’s *A System of Christian Doctrine* is a study in what is traditionally called mediating theology. In this study Dorner worked with and between such thinkers as Schleiermacher, on the one hand, and Hegel and Schelling,

on the other, as well as between newer and more traditional approaches. He started his theological reflection, for example, from the Christian experience of faith and yet asserted the need faith has to seek understanding through thought and reflection. As we shall see, he mediated as well between the thought of Hegel and that of Schelling as he developed his notion of an ethical Trinity in which are held together an at least quasi-Hegelian notion of necessity and a Schellingian insistence on freedom.

### Dorner on Trinity

Dorner divides his *System* into two main parts: "Fundamental or Apologetic Doctrine," treated in §§ 15–70, and "Specific Doctrine," treated in §§ 71–155. We will focus on selected elements in the first part, which has as its purpose to verify the "Godhumanity" of Jesus Christ. More germane to our interests, in this first part Dorner does this verification by arguing to the certainty of the object of faith, namely, the Christian idea of God as Trinity. More specifically, we will concentrate on the second division of this first part, entitled "The Doctrine of God or of the Holy Trinity" (344),<sup>4</sup> subsection C, "Positive Exposition of the Doctrine of the Holy Tri-unity" (412),<sup>5</sup> composed of §§ 31, 31b, and 32.

Before turning directly to Dorner's creative presentation of Trinity, however, it will be helpful to mention briefly the more general relationship Dorner sees between faith and its content or object. In this regard, along with Schleiermacher he insists that we start from the Christian experience of faith. But, in order to avoid what he considers to be the inevitably subjective direction in which Schleiermacher's approach and method leads, he speaks of Christian faith as a way of knowing which has its own proper pious object or content. He then says that this faith seeks out certainty with regard to what it believes. He argues that neither an appeal to ecclesiastical authority nor to the authority of Scripture as such is sufficient to establish certainty with regard to faith's object. For these authorities are both ultimately appeals to a source of certainty outside of the object or content itself of faith. Here he understands especially the evangelical faith of the Reformation. The certainty faith seeks is not that of a logical demonstration but, rather, that of reasoned necessity. By way of anticipation, we can note that this demonstration of scientific certainty regarding the Christian idea of God as Trinity will lay in this idea's ability, starting from experience, to solve a number of problems arising in relation to the notion of God. So,

for Dorner faith is the way of knowing and the object or content of faith is the way of being. Theology, then, is the reflexively carried out development of the understanding of the object or content of faith now no longer merely as piously understood but as scientifically demonstrated both to the believer and even to others as well.<sup>6</sup>

With this understanding of the relationship between faith and its object or content in mind, we can now consider more specific selected elements of Dorner's richly developed positive statement of the doctrine of God as the essentially triune. Dorner presents his trinitarian thought, as mentioned, in three articles, §§ 31, 31b, and 32, parts of which we will present in closer paraphrasing of his own wording. In the first of these, § 31, he makes two basic points. In the first part of § 31 (412–16) he spells out the aim of his reflection, which is to sketch out the relationship between Christian Evangelical faith and the Christian idea of God as Trinity. In a brief phenomenological analysis of faith he affirms that "the objective basis of our communion with God is contained in the theanthropic personality of Christ." Faith could not assure its full sense if it did not accept that there was in Christ "a mode of the being of God, which refers to an internal distinction of God in Himself as its secure and eternal ground" (415). Without such a mode of being (*Seinsweise*, often used in parallel with *Hypostase*), Christ would be a mere man. Dorner continues, saying that the immanence of the Holy Spirit equally weighs upon and affects faith. Both Christ and the Holy Spirit must be permanent modes based in the eternal and immutable being of God. Thus faith poses the problem of the relationship between unity and triunity (415–16). In fact, for Dorner faith poses this problem to science as well (413).

In the second part of § 31 (417–19), Dorner spells out his aim in developing his trinitarian theological position. He acknowledges that, with its notion of Christian freedom, the Reformation worked out an anthropological consideration as to how necessity and freedom are brought together in the Christian personality. But now he wishes to take that reflection a step further and show how necessity and freedom are maintained, and their unity rooted, in God. He proposes a theological expression of the necessary anchorage of the unity of necessity and freedom in God seen as eternal archetype and supreme principle. By way of anticipation, Dorner acknowledges this unity has already been treated at length by the Fathers of the fourth century. But he rather insightfully notes that they remained with what he calls more physical and logical forms. To be adequate to the needs of Evangelical faith, which necessarily involves the ethical, Dorner

will propose an ethical Trinity (*ethische Trinität*, also ethical Triunity, *ethische Dreieinigkeit*) as “the divine foundation of believing Christian personality” (419).

Dorner continues this creative reflection in § 31b, where he first speaks of the Trinity of the physical definitions of the concept of God and then of the logical Trinity. In this first part of the article (420–22), he speaks of a living God who is characterized in that life by aseity. As any living reality, then, God must include distinction and union of these distinctions. Self-origination requires that this union must be the result of an internally originating triad, otherwise there would result either an infinite progression or God's not reaching Godself again. In effect God would remain simply a rigid, self-identical substance. In the second part of the article (422–26), Dorner refers to the logical Trinity, in which divine self-consciousness arises due to the Son's being the image of the Father. But any knowledge must arise as the union of thought and thinker, subject and object. In God's knowledge as self-consciousness, God fully knows Godself, which requires a third moment. To explain this, Dorner appeals to the example of human self-consciousness which, in its alienation, does not arrive at full self-consciousness but does come to some limited form of such knowledge. In the divine, however, where all is transparent in the full gift of Father to Son, a “third and equally real principle of union is necessary.” This “Third is not the mere sum of the two first forms of Being of the Godhead, is not the divine Essence as such, but one of the modes of the existence of the divine Essence, as the two others also are. This Third is the *principle* of their union by being the power in God, which elevates into consciousness the unity of Essence in the distinctions” (425).

Dorner moves in the third part of § 31b, tellingly entitled “The Ethical Derivation of the Trinity, or the Ethical Triunity of the Divine Will” (426–47), to the core consideration of his trinitarian thought. That core consideration is the way in which necessity and freedom can be maintained and united in God so that we can recognize the Trinity as archetype and principle (427) of Christian ethical personality. He considers the ethical in four steps. At the beginning of the first step (426–32), he recalls that in § 26 he had concluded God should be thought of as the primary ethical Essence and the ultimate, real, and primary Goodness. However, the question now arises as to how we can think of God as good. It would seem we cannot think of the ethical in God as pertaining to being since the ethical is the result of willing. But if we think of the good in God existing only as the result of willing, we end up in an arbitrary understanding of the good, which is

antithetical to the notion of the good as such. Dorner sees Plato as already having noted this dilemma when he asked whether the good is good because of the divine will or whether the divine will wills it because it is good. He notes that antiquity had no answer to this question. Finally neither did the Middle Ages have an answer, given its vacillation between Duns Scotus, who took the volitional side, and Thomas Aquinas, who thought in terms of what was ethically necessary and good in itself (427–32). Dorner closes this first of four considerations by arguing, in very tight wording, that God as the Good is both “the ethically necessary and the ethically free.” He has to have this “antithesis within Him, or eternally divide Himself.” The questions as to whether God is good because God wills goodness or goodness is good because God wills it can only be answered if we think of God in such a way that God is divine in various ways, “absolutely correlated, however, and reciprocally conditioning” (432). Dorner insists that in order to establish this we must start with the ethically necessary and not from the free. If we start with the latter, we arrive only at that which is arbitrary. But willing in an arbitrary fashion does not realize the ethical.

Dorner begins the second (432–38) of the four steps in his argument in favor of an ethical Trinity by asserting that the ethical is rational and good in itself and is not above God. Rather, it lies within divine Being. God is good as the ethically necessary Being. He identifies this “first form of Being in God as the ethical One . . . the Principle of Fatherhood in God” (433). God the Father is necessarily good Being. But this does not describe God completely and we need to think a further “mode of divine Being in relation to the ethical.” Without freedom we would end in Fatalism. Dorner recalls physical definitions of Trinity involving self-production and logical definitions involving self-consciousness. They must be ethical self-production or we fall back upon a God who is merely naturally ethical and not such as spirit. There is, then, in a satisfactory conception of God a movement of ethical self-production or self-realization. He names this “second Principle . . . *God the Son*, the mode of the existence of the spiritual God in the form of freedom” (434). Both of these, the necessary and the free or volitional forms of goodness in God, refer mutually to one another. Dorner speaks, for example, of the Son’s internal connection to the Father in New Testament terms as the incarnate Son’s free obedience to the Father.

In God the ethically necessary and the free are not contradictory. Dorner argues in various ways that the ethically necessary is rational and desires its own idea and expression in freedom. “It is a love of freedom” (435). In turn, the free strives to get back to the ethically necessary and to



condition itself by that ethically necessary. It cannot maintain itself without the ethically necessary. With reference again to the Reformation standpoint of Christian freedom, Dorner says that the union of ethical necessity and freedom in God is “only perfected by the *third Principle*; one and the same Principle, namely, the Holy Spirit, originally and archetypically combines in God the ethically necessary and the free, and consummates the same union as a kind of copy in man, the image of God” (437). The agency of the Holy Spirit eternally effects the unity of the self-knowledge and the self-volition of the free in the necessary, and that of the necessary in the free. This is absolute self-consciousness and free Love. This “ontology or metaphysics of love thus depicted forms the conclusion of the process by which God is *eternally absolute Personality*” (437).

In the third (438–44) of these four steps in his reflection on the ethical Trinity, Dorner opens with the statement that God is absolute personality. He then, as if he has gained his stride, moves quickly but clearly and succinctly through a series of potential objections to attributing personality or personhood to God. He demolishes them, from his perspective, one after another in tight, direct argumentation. In his consideration of potential objections, Dorner first argues more generally that divine knowledge would be an imperfect knowledge if it did not include self-knowledge or if, in God's consciousness, God did not know and perceive Godself. God would not be free if, as absolute good, God did not will Godself.

We can get a further taste of the way in which Dorner responds to and refutes various objections to thinking of God as absolute personality by briefly listing a sampling of those objections and several of his responses. For example, some say God would be limited by what is distinct from God. So personality involves limitation. Dorner says Fichte accepted this objection and stayed with the affirmation of a moral order of the world. Hegel in turn spoke, rather, of an ongoing subjectivization in and through finite spirits. For Dorner, God would in this case “never come to self-realization as absolute spirit.” Then, too, some say self-consciousness and personality come about only through action of an other on a passive self. Here Dorner interestingly distinguishes between “being produced by” and “stimulated by.” Self-consciousness is not, as Dorner says, produced but, rather, stimulated from without (439). He goes on to assert that God is always active in the positing of Godself. Since God is in control of all which is not God, there is no clear evidence that something not God would limit God. Rather, God “conceives and embraces everything in Himself dynamically” (440). God's infinity is not simply boundlessness. God is definite and the most definite

being. Again, some say we cannot grasp God in thought. Thus God cannot be thought as personal. In thinking God we would only finitize God. Dorner responds that in saying anything we think of God finitizes God we end up in an internal contradiction because when we so speak we are nevertheless affirming a definition of God.

Again others say that thinking of God as personality would make God merely an individual or single being. But God is supposed to be the all-embracing universal or the whole of which individuals or persons are parts. Dorner responds, saying here we are thinking in inadequate quantitative terms. That God alone has aseity is the basic point to keep in mind. God is to be thought as "the universal ground of the possibility of everything He is not" (441), all of which owes its existence to his divine self-conscious will. Dorner insists that God knows and wills Godself by being triune and through his self-originating aseity in being, knowledge, and ethical volition. God is primarily his own content, for absoluteness means a fullness. God's uniqueness lies in God's having aseity as triune. "The concept of God is a particular and definite concept, and it has an essentially universal reference" (442).

Dorner brings this third step in his presentation of the ethical Trinity to a close with further reflection on God as love and on the implications of this understanding for thinking of God as absolute personality. He treats of this question of God's absolute personality in relation to the notion of love in what he calls a turn from his previous focus more on thinking and being to the side of the will. In effect, by way of anticipation, we can say that Dorner has, while continuing to refer to being, reformulated the notion of divine essence as absolute personality. This move on his part reflects, and is part of, his serious effort to rethink God in terms brought into play by Idealist thinkers in a new and modern way congenial to at least certain strands of nineteenth-century thinking. For him the contents of divine love are the idea that God is love "by means of the three Trinitarian Principles, [and who] necessarily loves Himself primarily" (442). Dorner remarks that all he has said so far is simply the description of the process of divine self-love. He then goes on to develop the idea that God's perfection includes communicability. So God's love as self-preservation is equally an ethical self-love, a universal love open to that which is not God. While God is transcendent, God is able to exist in anything distinct from Godself. In divine self-preservation God is master of Godself and does not lose Godself in loving what is not God. There is no question then of simple pantheism. The fact that God, as the unity of necessity and freedom, loves the good

and can will to communicate it to another is the highest thing of which we can conceive, namely, divine love. God concentrates in Godself "all modes of being of the ethical good." In a way reminiscent of Hegel's himself making a trinitarian claim, Dorner ends this third step with his own claim in which he stresses will. For him, the true concept of the Trinity must be ethical and this ethical conception permits "Christian personality [to] attain its absolute theological verification" (444).

Dorner ends § 31b and his four-step presentation of the ethical Trinity with a fourth and final series of remarks (445–47) concerning the fruitfulness of his understanding of the ethical Trinity. He says that we find in his understanding a uniting of objective doctrines with the Protestant principle. Bringing these together gives us a basis for asserting something truly true, that is, human beings who are created in the image of God find their truth in God who is the archetypal unity of necessity and freedom, the ultimate expression of love. He then turns to a practical consideration, namely, the relationship between religion and morality or ethics. In God we see the necessity of the ethical verified in the fact that in his essence God freely wills the good. So Nomianism or the stress on the importance of the law for salvation becomes a merely intermediary stage in which one has not yet profited from the experience of the Holy Spirit. Again, religion is necessary for the ethical. If God is the absolutely ethical, then true morality requires at least an unconscious surrender to God. For in God, as the archetype of the good, freedom requires necessity to avoid caprice and arbitrary willing. So Anti-Nomianism or the lack of stress on the importance of what is good and right also finds its corrective in the ethical Trinity. With the ethically necessary and the ethically free maintained in their difference, neither Deism nor pantheism can stand. Both Deism, with its cold and distant God, and pantheism, with its God who loses Godself in the created world, end up in contradictions. In the ethical Trinity transcendence remains ever communicative without losing itself and immanence remains holy and exalted, as Dorner writes, "in participation with and condescension to what is beneath" (447).

Dorner brings to an end his "Positive Exposition of the Doctrine of the Holy Tri-Unity" with § 32, entitled "The Absolute Personality in its Relation to the Divine Hypostases and Attributes" (447–65). In line with Idealist thought taken very generally, he focuses on the notion of absolute personality as the basic way of understanding the triune God. He locates the unity of God in this notion and subordinates to it the more traditional trinitarian notions such as being, essence, and substance. He equates God as absolute personality with a movement of what he calls ethical love, namely,

in self-preservation a love of Godself and in communicative form a love of what has been brought about by God.

Article § 32 opens with a general statement. There then follow six final reflections on the ethical Trinity. After these six reflections, which constitute six steps in his presentation, he will turn to the question of creation and a series of subsequently treated more specific, soteriologically oriented theological themes, all of which he discusses in the light of his trinitarian thought.<sup>7</sup> In his general statement, Dorner says that absolute personality is the combination of the three modes of divine existence participating in it. So the absolute personality is the eternally present result of the trinitarian process of God as spirit and life. Though the three modes are not in themselves individually personal, they “share in the One Divine Personality” (448).

Following upon this initial clarification of his position, Dorner teases out further consequences of that position. In a first step (448–50), he argues that, in line with Christian consciousness and the witness of Scripture, each of the divine modes remains distinct in the resultant absolute divine personality. He refers to the ancient trinitarian doctrine of *perichōrēsis* or intermingling of the three as he argues that the absolute personality relates to what is not God in and through each of the divine modes in a distinct way while they always work together. God knows and wills Godself in a distinct way in each mode of being. This is true, he says, as well within the triune God as it is in God’s relation to the world. Dorner concludes this section, saying “He [God] is personal in the three Hypostases, as He is personal by their means” (450).

In step two (450–51) of his further reflections, Dorner works with the notion of divine life as an organism to underscore again that result and members reciprocally condition one another. The absolute personality is unity and eternal result while equally being cooperative in its self-production. As organism, the members cooperate in the production of the result while the result precedes the parts. In God distinctions become more profound than they do in us while the union becomes absolutely intimate. In step three (452–53) he affirms that his view brings together what we would today tend to identify as Western and Eastern approaches to Trinity. Unity brings about the persistence of distinctions. With regard to the ancient saying that God acts outside of God as one, he concludes that “in the revelation of each of the Modes of the divine existence the one absolute Personality is present and efficient” (453).

In step four (453–62), Dorner spends a great deal of time reviewing the now-affirmed supreme divine unity and its ability to ground a whole

series of divine attributes he had previously considered. Without indicating them in detail here, we can simply note that he speaks of rising from physical attributes to the intellectual and then to the ethical, with all the complex connotations these references bring with them in his thought. In a special observation at the end of this fourth step (460–62), he refers to divine immutability which, in his thought, is of particular import.<sup>8</sup> He notes the importance of being able both to count on the continuing faithfulness of God and to acknowledge that God is the living God who maintains a living relationship with the world. How then to balance immutability and living presence? He finds the response in the Christian ethical idea of God with its correct idea of love. In God, love includes justice, so God is both concerned with self-preservation and with self-communication. Immutability includes rather than excludes love. To be truly Godself, God cannot be indifferent to history and its development. God assumes different relations to it. In this way God retains ethical self-identity through changing relations with the world. Through change, God remains and retains his ethical self-identity. “In the last resort the divine Immutability rests upon God’s ethical Essence, which is at once the principle of His Self-preservation and of His movement or of the guarantee of His living relation to the world” (461).

Dorner then continues his reflection on the importance of his ethical understanding of immutability for our life of piety. He does this in a fifth step (462–63) in his further reflections on the implications of understanding God as absolute personality. His notion of ethical immutability leads to an understanding of the history of God’s deeds in the world, to seeing justification as a special act, to asserting a special providence, and to affirming a change not only in the relation of the world to God but of God to the world. After the coming of Christ, the world has a different meaning and value for God. This all gives rise to a living intercourse and relation of reciprocity between God and humans. In a relation of asking and giving, God actually hears prayer and lets Godself, in his very self-identity, be conditioned by prayer. In a sixth and final step (463–65), Dorner speaks of God’s being all-sufficient and blessed. God is blessed not because God becomes love by willing something distinct from Godself but because God is “love which wills to be itself holy and communicative and is blessed in itself. Only thus can God will a world without being dependent upon a world.” He hints that God’s all-sufficiency, to the affirmation of which the ethical concept of God leads, brings us to the question of creation (464). With these last two steps in his further reflection on the implications of our understanding of God as absolute personality, and especially the fifth

step concerning the relationship between the Christian idea of a trinitarian God and Christian piety, Dorner comes back to the starting point of his positive presentation of the triune God. That point is of course the Christian experience of faith. He will continue on to theological considerations of a more formally soteriological character in the rest of his *System of Christian Doctrine*.

### A Later Testimonial to Idealist Influence

We should acknowledge that Dorner, in his constructive reflection on Trinity, works insightfully and in original ways directly with various ecclesial understandings of Trinity as developed especially in the earlier centuries of the history of the Church. Yet, of more direct concern here, we can as well readily recognize his creative appropriation of Idealist approaches to Trinity. He reflects at least the indirect influence of Fichte to the extent that he works throughout with a triply structured understanding of reality as we know it, though he clearly rejects Fichte's more limited and restrictive understanding of the notion of personality or personhood (438). With Hegel he sees the critical importance of beginning with the Trinity, though in Hegel this is a beginning in the realm of logic or pure thought where Hegel speaks of moments in the dialectical development of that thought. Dorner, for his part, begins not with such a realm of pure thought but with the more theologically acceptable aseity of the triune God, in whom the distinctions among Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are, in a sense with Hegel, not persons. Rather, as Dorner says, they are modes of being (*Seinsweise*). With Schelling he stresses the importance of will in his idea of an ethical Trinity, though he maintains this notion of will in tandem with the need for reference to necessity, a more Hegelian theme, in the idea of a truly ethical Trinity.<sup>9</sup> Whereas Schelling will speak of potencies becoming persons, Dorner maintains the trinitarian distinctions as divine modes of being out of which absolute personality eternally arises, and in and through which absolute personality eternally expresses itself.<sup>10</sup> In his insistence that the dynamically developing ethical Trinity be thought of as absolute personality, Dorner reflects the influence of both Hegel, who spoke more of divine subjectivity, and Schelling, who spoke more explicitly of absolute personality. In a brief but telling one-page discussion of Hegel and Schelling, Dorner acknowledges the contributions of both. There he writes, "It is impossible to deny that these systems [Hegel's and Schelling's] have done the service of having achieved something for the

metaphysical foundations of the concept of the Trinity" (400).<sup>11</sup> We might perhaps recall, then, for sake of comparison and discussion that Hegel's philosophy in general and his reading of Trinity in particular is a movement of thought from possibility to actuality to necessity. The later Schelling's philosophical reflection on Trinity begins with an initial moment of full actuality followed by a movement from possibility (potentiality) to renewed, full actuality. Whereas with Hegel the movement is one of conceptual thought, for Schelling it develops fundamentally as a movement of will. Dorner, for his part, develops his theological reflection on ethical Trinity as a movement from necessity to actuality to realized possibility.<sup>12</sup>

Samuel M. Powell has drawn attention to the influence of Idealist philosophies on Dorner's theology and speaks of that theology's congruence, at various points, with Hegel's philosophy. He likewise indicates ways in which Dorner differed from Hegel on Trinity, such as the fact that for Dorner philosophy did not constitute a higher way of knowing than faith. However, as he points out, like Hegel, Dorner presented God as a "harmony of opposites, a unity that embraces difference."<sup>13</sup> He notes as well that Dorner, with Hegel, refused to remain with God understood merely as substance. God was spirit, the unity of two prior moments of thought for Hegel and of three modes of being for Dorner. We might add, however, that much of what Powell notes concerning Hegel's influence on Dorner would apply as well in a general way to Schelling's potential influence on Dorner.

In his dissertation, written some years before these just referred to statements, Powell cited Robert F. Brown as to whether Dorner sided more with Hegel or Schelling regarding freedom. Powell writes that Brown saw Dorner as following Hegel's view of God rather than Schelling's. The implication then was that for Dorner "freedom [is] uninhibited and complete actualization, and not the Schellingian freedom that can choose among alternatives."<sup>14</sup> John W. Cooper<sup>15</sup> also, again citing Brown, says that Dorner sides with Hegel on the question of whether Dorner follows Schelling on freedom. It is true that Schelling himself develops at least a hypothetically radical metaphysics of will, but that metaphysics remains perhaps, once launched, slightly less radical than we might at first think. It is true that I have not in my limited reading of Dorner seen that he speaks explicitly of choosing among alternatives. That Dorner does not speak of such choosing would seem to be one of the reasons why various commentators say Dorner's understanding of freedom is closer to that of Hegel than that of Schelling. Dorner does indicate that necessity is the first of three modes of being and wants to avoid mere arbitrary choosing on the part of the divine. Yet he

clearly says that, in line with divine aseity, God did not need to create the world in order to be absolute personality. This would seem to distinguish his view of God and God's free relationship with the world rather clearly from that of Hegel. It would seem to leave room at least in this regard for a somewhat more Schellingian interpretation of Dorner's understanding of freedom.<sup>16</sup> Not unlike Schelling, Dorner strongly stresses will in his understanding of Trinity. But, without wanting to tear Dorner away from Hegel and Schelling regarding necessity and freedom, perhaps in this regard we might say he was more his own person than we have tended to recognize.

Dorner reflected in his trinitarian thought a number of generally speaking Idealist themes and the overall Idealist dynamic of a movement from a first distinction to a second and then to an inclusive third distinction. In addition to points already mentioned, we could note that Dorner has picked up on the Idealist effort to go beyond another form of distinction, even if only a distinction of reason in classical Thomist theology. That distinction he wished to go beyond is one between divine essence and the distinctions in God. He has as well brought God and history into a close relationship and even introduced the notion of history into his understanding of God and God's development. In the process, Dorner did indeed incorporate a number of identifiably Hegelian elements into his own thinking. However, we cannot really escape the feeling that he was finally closer to Schelling than to Hegel. He himself had written two important articles on the thought of the later Schelling.<sup>17</sup> He strove to maintain in God both necessity and freedom and, while he held them to be mutually conditioning, he insisted that necessity needed freedom. Following in a somewhat more Kantian line, he stressed the importance of the good. And, consequently, in his own thought he insisted on the role of will, even ultimately over the role of knowing. For Dorner, God as Trinity was not, as for Hegel, a movement of conceptual thought in three syllogistically related moments. God was, rather, absolute personality in three ever-distinct modes of being related to one another eternally and acting together in creation and salvation. In this way of presenting ever-distinct divine modes of being, he was again surely closer to Schelling's position. As with Schelling, so too in Dorner there is a certain fullness in God already from the beginning of God's development. There is then a clear resemblance between Dorner's trinitarian thought and that of Hegel and Schelling, but especially that of Schelling. This resemblance and his own statements regarding Idealist thought permit us to claim Dorner as a strong witness, indeed as providing a strong testimonial, to the influence of post-Kantian German Idealism on subsequent trinitarian thought.





## Vladimir Sergeyevich Solovyov

### *A Trinitarian Metaphysics*

Solovyov (1852–1900) is often described as the founder of modern Russian philosophy.<sup>1</sup> Philosopher, mystic, poet, all of these and more, he was a profound original thinker. In 1862, at the age of nine he claimed to have had a mystical vision of what he came to identify as divine *Sophia* appearing in a feminine form. Yet, around the age of fourteen, he turned atheist. At about eighteen he returned to a committed religious outlook. At the end of his life, after a long-term interest in Roman Catholicism, he received Holy Communion from a Russian Orthodox priest.<sup>2</sup> In 1874, at the age of twenty-one, he defended his master's thesis, *The Crisis of Western Philosophy: Against the Positivists*.<sup>3</sup> The thesis served for many years in Russia as an important reference in philosophy. Already then in this early work he had shown a strong interest in and gave evidence of being quite enamored with the triadic structure of subjectivity. It would be hard to overestimate his influence on Eastern, but especially Russian, thought.

He went to England for further study and while there was told, in 1875 in a second vision, to look again for divine *Sophia* in Egypt. There in 1876 he reported a third and final vision of her in the desert near Cairo.<sup>4</sup> He taught briefly in Moscow and in St. Petersburg but resigned his university appointment after encouraging without success the Tsar Alexander II to pardon the assassins of the Tsar's father.<sup>5</sup> For the rest of his rather solitary life, beyond lecturing briefly in France "he lived out his ideal of practical Christianity to the point of folly."<sup>6</sup> Generous perhaps to an extreme, he gave away whatever he might have in his wallet to someone in need or his

coat and shoes to some needy person he met on the street. Apparently even animals loved him.<sup>7</sup> Through all of this he continued to work, in various original and creative ways, with a wide range of religious and scriptural sources as well as with much of Western and Russian philosophy including, for example, the thought of the Neo-Platonists, of British Empiricists, and of German Rationalists and Idealists.

Of particular present interest, he focused on religious and philosophical themes such as, for example, an enriched and seemingly at least initially Spinoza-inspired view of the all-unity or absolute taken as oneness inclusive of multiplicity.<sup>8</sup> Further examples would include a variously understood notion of *Sophia* or wisdom<sup>9</sup> and the ancient idea of divinization, so dear especially in Eastern Christian traditions. He reworked this notion of divinization rather dramatically into what he called "divine humanity" (*bogochelovechestvo*).<sup>10</sup> He also worked to favor Church unity. He did this in some ways reminiscent of Schelling's interrelating of the Petrine, Pauline, and Johannine Churches. He sketched out a philosophically expressed reading of the history of the Church and the particular role the Russian Orthodox Church would play in the eventual attainment of true Church unity. This unity was ultimately to be "a 'tri-unity' of papal, imperial and prophetic forces representing a temporal manifestation of the Trinity."<sup>11</sup> The famous twentieth-century Roman Catholic theologian, Hans Urs von Balthasar, generously, and indeed with some reason, accepted the description of Solovyov's work as "the most universal intellectual construction of modern times" and "the most comprehensive philosophical statement of the Christian totality in modern times."<sup>12</sup> For von Balthasar, Solovyov was right up there with Thomas Aquinas in his ability to order the history of thought<sup>13</sup> and, we might add, with Hegel and Schelling.

As we turn to his thought on Trinity, we can already now by anticipation call attention to Solovyov's concern for wholeness, which we will highlight through more direct quoting when he speaks of it. He creatively brings together this Idealist concern with what he finds to be a similar concern in the overall Russian mindset. Solovyov's trinitarian religious metaphysics, a form of concrete Idealism, reflects the dialectical development proposed by Hegel but is closer to Schelling in its stress on will, facticity, and existence.

### Solovyov's *Lectures on Divine Humanity*

Solovyov delivered his famous series of twelve lectures in St. Petersburg from 1877 to 1881 before a distinguished audience that included Dostoevsky and

Tolstoy.<sup>14</sup> In these exquisite and lofty reflections, published as *Lectures on Divine Humanity*,<sup>15</sup> he gave a carefully developed philosophical interpretation to a good number of religious themes. The *Lectures* represent his major systematic effort to construct a reasoned, coherent presentation of Trinity.<sup>16</sup> Solovyov himself probably composed, at least partially, the following excerpt from the announcement of his lectures, in which he focuses on the notion of Divine Humanity, the final flowering of his understanding of God as Trinity:

The central idea of the lectures is Divine humanity as the living God. Of the twelve lectures the first six will represent a necessary transition from the natural content of human consciousness to that central idea that first received historical actuality in Christianity . . . The remaining six lectures will be concerned with the positive development of the religious idea itself. They will cover the actualization of Divine Humanity.<sup>17</sup>

In the first six lectures Solovyov proceeds in a manner generally speaking similar to the ways in which Hegel and Schelling had, each in his own way, done in arguing to their philosophical readings of Trinity. That is, he sees the understanding of God or the absolute, considered as Trinity, as the climax to a philosophical reading of the varied ways in which several selected exemplary religious and philosophical traditions conceive of God. Consistent with his just-cited announcement of the lectures, Solovyov confirms in lecture ten that he had earlier on in lectures three, four, and five respectively pointed out the relative significance of the Hindus, Greeks, and Jews in religious history (147). To appreciate his creative reworking of the notion of Trinity and be better positioned to reflect on the varied German Idealist influence on his understanding of Trinity, we will select several insights and remarks found in the first five lectures. These insights and remarks are needed to understand better what Solovyov will say more explicitly concerning Trinity in lectures six and seven. Following upon a somewhat longer review of his creative presentation on Trinity in these two lectures, we will then refer to several of his ideas developed in lectures eight through twelve insofar as they complement and provide further insight into his presentation on Trinity in lectures six and seven.

Solovyov opens the first lecture with reference to what he calls the religious principle: "Religion is the connection of humanity and the world with the absolute principle and focus of all that exists" (1). This is in fact his first reference to what he will later on in the lecture refer to as "the reality of all, the universal, integral reality . . . the reality of *Him Who is*

*all*. It is the reality of God" (9–10). It is this notion which he will further refine, step-by-step, throughout the lectures and various aspects of which he will recall time and again as he analyzes negative and positive realizations of reality, among them, especially here in the first lecture, the sorry state of religion. He regretted that in his day religion had been reduced to the private sphere. He cleverly sets up the overall argument of his lectures by examining what he says has replaced religion, namely, either socialism or positivism. Socialism, especially as it arises in the West, ought to work for material equality but is unsuccessful. In a tightly argued analysis, Solovyov introduces the notion of will, which becomes so central to his overall argument in the lectures. Of particular interest is the way in which he proposes that egoism is the root of social untruth, and that social truth lies in self-denial and love. All can be freely subordinated to the will of all only when all have freely accepted the absolute or moral principle of being properly related to the focus of all that exists. In Solovyov's succinct analysis socialism ironically leads to religion (6–8). Positivism, which stresses truth as fact or given, equally leads for Solovyov to religion. For neither a single separate fact, that is, a single will, nor the totality of them yields the truth. "Consequently, the reality of the all . . . is the reality of *Him Who is all*" (9–10). Thus, positivism likewise leads to religion.

In this first lecture Solovyov works especially with the notion of will to argue to the free realization of the religious principle, namely, his understanding of the "all" as inclusive and thus unlimited. This is for him the only principle which truly grounds, for example, the French Revolution's call for liberty, equality, and fraternity (3 with 10). In this lecture he has variously introduced the themes of all-inclusivity, will, and freedom with which he will work in various ways to carry his argument throughout the lectures.

In the second lecture, Solovyov continues to develop these three themes, but now more specifically with reference to two aspects of or, perhaps better, movements in overall Western thought. He sees Western thought as a necessary transition, a negative moment opening the way to a more positive, fuller religious future. In Western thought these two aspects or movements are Roman Catholicism, representing the religious past, and materialism. For Solovyov, Roman Catholicism contains within it the truth of God, as he so colorfully puts it, "even if this truth wears an unbecoming garment" (14). Roman Catholicism includes within it the general principle that the spiritual should include the secular and civil.<sup>18</sup> But it tries to achieve this inclusion as an external unity by means of force. And, in so doing, it reduces itself to a merely external force rather than working to bring about

this inclusion in a way appropriate to the divine principle that should lead to this form of subordination. According to this divine principle, God is love and free spirit, so that the inclusiveness appropriate to the Church must be that attained by free consent, by spiritualizing secular society. Solovyov then sees Protestantism as liberating the concrete individual to turn freely to the divine principle. The individual can so turn because he or she has, as he puts it, absolute, divine significance (16–17).

Solovyov uses this reference to human absoluteness to introduce a careful, doubled analysis of absoluteness which will lead him to affirm that in God freedom is necessary (17–21). He distinguishes two types of absoluteness characteristic of the human person, the first of which is negative absoluteness referring to the individual's capacity to go beyond any finite content (17). This negative absoluteness constitutes as well a demand for all of reality, positive absoluteness. He goes on to say that Western civilization has come to affirm human inner freedom and the absolute rights of the person, but then without acknowledging positive absoluteness. Contemporary consciousness asserts absolute rights but recognizes that the holder of these rights is limited and transitory. For Solovyov presence of this assertion and this recognition in fact posits a contradiction within human consciousness itself (19). He then pursues the question of ever-sharpening contradictions arising out of this situation as he moves slowly to the insightful but surprising conclusion that contemporary consciousness leads to a fuller religious future.

For Solovyov this affirmation of contradiction is rooted in a false reading of the notions of matter and force, on the one hand, and of necessity, on the other. He instead argues to the existence of spiritual forces and not merely material ones. He likewise claims that necessity means different things at different levels. It is one thing to assert that a stone necessarily falls to the ground when released. It is quite another to say that a “sublime idea . . . provokes one to do noble deeds.” Freedom is for Solovyov one form of necessity. In the case of God, “it is necessary for God to love all . . . for God *freedom is necessary*” (21).

Finally, Solovyov turns briefly to the question of materialism (22–23). To the extent that it concerns itself only with physical forces, materialism is true. It is false insofar as it extrapolates beyond them to assert that only such forces exist, for it goes beyond its own domain into the wider realm of philosophy within which it is only one of many philosophical opinions. The truth is that the human person is negatively absolute but also able to be positively absolute in that the human person is able to attain the fullness of being and content. Solovyov ends the second lecture with a fundamental

announcement opening the way to the rest of his lectures. Belief in the human person is equally belief in God “for Divinity belongs to human beings and to God.” Yet God’s divinity is eternal actuality whereas for humans it is given to them, present only in “possibility, only [in] striving.” But belief in God and in humanity are fully actualized when they “meet in the one, complete, integral truth of *Divine humanity*” (23–24).

As Solovyov had announced at the beginning of his lectures, in the third, fourth, and fifth lectures he turns to Buddhist pessimism and nihilism, then Plato’s idealism, and Old Testament monotheism. In each case, he explores the notion of God and the relationship between God and humankind typical of each people as he moves, in his own form of dialectical progression, toward Christianity and its idea of that relationship.

However, in the third lecture Solovyov does considerably more than simply reflect on Buddhism as the last word uttered by Hindu consciousness (147). He first sets up his basic understanding of the three spheres making up human consciousness (25–30). He starts out by distinguishing between material and mechanical means used to give expression to what he calls a universal content itself independent of such means. He refers to such content as the idea and the organs of speech or the brain and its functioning as the means used to express it. Once he has established the independence of this absolute content or idea, he identifies will, reason, and feeling as means through which a determinate content is realized but not constituted (28). He continues to lay the groundwork for his overall triply structured understanding of reality. He sets up, as point of departure for further reflection, the need each of these three forms of consciousness, namely, will, reason, and feeling has for an object appropriate to it and which attracts it. Thus, the will has as its object something objectively good, thought something objectively true, and feeling something objectively beautiful, with good, truth, and beauty being characteristics of one and the same thing. Since will, reason, and feeling are “forces of one spirit,” they are three spheres of the spiritual life, merely “different forms (ideas) of the one absolute principle, which in its actuality is the proper object of religion” (29–30).

With this affirmation Solovyov arrives at the second topic he presents in his third lecture, namely, a further development of the overall understanding of religion to which he had referred in the first lecture. Here he argues to the importance of philosophy of religion or thinking about revelation. He will then identify three stages of religious development (30–38).

Solovyov proposes that the reality of God, or even that of any other being beyond us, is necessary “for the will and moral activity, for reason and

true knowledge, for feeling and art" (30). But this necessity only establishes the highest degree of probability. To paraphrase several of his remarks rather closely, he says that absolute certainty about this reality comes only through faith. He follows up this affirmation with various examples and a careful consideration of them. For him, facts beyond those of our direct consciousness are beyond the limits of our experience. It takes faith as an act of spirit reaching beyond what we actually are. However, once faith confirms the existence of an external reality, experience provides the content, with the latter becoming a further confirmation of the former. For example, once we accept the existence of the sun, the experience of warmth and light confirm that acceptance and tell us something about the sun (30–32).

This approach toward confirming the existence of an external reality can be applied to the reality of God as well. Once we believe that God is, we experience and work to know what God is. To know what God is we need to develop a philosophy of religion. For "only . . . a connected system and a complete synthesis of religious truths can give us adequate knowledge of the divine principle as the absolute or all-embracing principle" (33). He argues that religious development is a divine-human process in which religion at various stages in this development is not false but simply seen from a later perspective as becoming an element in a fuller or complete revelation (35).

Solovyov succinctly sketches out what are for him the characteristics of the highest degree of religious development and divine revelation. This series of characteristics sets the stage for his interpretations of Buddhism, Greek religion, Jewish religion, and his subsequent presentation of Christianity as the trinitarian religion. That which is to constitute the highest degree of religion must be free from exclusiveness and one-sidedness, thus representing the greatest generality, and have the greatest positive content, fullness, and integrity. It must constitute positive universality, the opposite of negative universality. He rejects deism and the like, which reduce religion to a lowest common denominator. Rather, the highest form of religion must have the fullest positive content, rich, alive, and concrete. The perfect religion contains all religions within itself. In an Hegelian turn of phrase reminiscent of Hegel's true infinite, he says that the truest form of religion, as possessing all religions, is free of all of them for they are not external to it and do not limit it.

In focusing on the ideal content of religious truth, Solovyov abstracts for the moment from the means by which that ideal content is revealed. This way of proceeding permits him to concentrate on sketching out the progressive order of historically disclosed religious truth to humankind since



historical order and logical order coincide, as he says, in their content. He identifies three elements that will structure this order, thus laying as well the groundwork for his later development of the notion of divine humanity. These three elements are “nature, the given, present reality . . . the *divine principle*, the sought goal and content, which is gradually revealing itself . . . the *human person*, the subject of life and consciousness . . . [which last] passes from the given to the sought and, by assimilating the divine principle, reunites nature too with this principle, transforming nature from the accidental into what ought to be” (37).

The first stage of religious development is that of mythological or natural religions where polytheism reigns in this, the stage of natural or immediate revelation. The second stage is the one in which the divine principle stands out over against nature. It is best represented by Buddhism and involves the negation of nature and can be called negative revelation. In the third stage the divine principle “is successively revealed in its own content, in that which it is in itself and for itself” (38). This is positive revelation.

In nature religion, humans first submit themselves to nature and then find it is merely external and without content, no longer divine. They are liberated externally and then internally from nature. This latter is liberation as first developed in Indian philosophy, namely, as pure personhood (39). Nature appears as evil, deceit, and suffering. Humans realize that all they have comes from themselves, and that they are linked only by will with nature when they strive to overcome suffering. The recognition that nature does not bear the significance of the absolute principle means it receives a “negative determination . . . the absence of being, as nothing, as *nirvana*” (42).<sup>19</sup> Solovyov recalls that this philosophical negation of all being is found, in contemporary consciousness, in the systems of Schopenhauer and Hartmann. He sees this negative worldview as “a logically necessary step in the development of the religious consciousness,” a worldview to which contemporary Western philosophy had returned. Solovyov brings the lecture to a close by remarking that if nature, considered outside of the divine principle, is evil, deceit, and suffering, then it becomes in its positive relation to the absolute principle that which makes possible the full actualization of the divine principle itself (44).

Solovyov opens the fourth lecture with reference to the Buddhist understanding of the absolute principle as nothing, but here only a negative nothingness or the deprivation of all being. In positive nothingness, freedom from all things presupposes dominion over all things. So, the divine principle is “free from all being” and “thereby the positive force or power

of all being" (45). The divine principle is absolute. He asks in what the all or content of this positive content of the divine principle consists, and immediately says it cannot consist in natural phenomena individually or in total since they are in constant transition and constitute only appearance. So we find "*the positive all* (the all-integrity or fullness of being)" only in the "world of ideal essences, as the realm of ideas." But, as he had done in the third lecture, here too he does considerably more than simply reflect on Plato's Idealism. His lecture takes on the form of a brief review of the history of thought from Platonism to present-day views. He argues that logical consistency leads "from the sensuous experience of phenomena to the speculative belief in ideas" (46).

Solovyov begins his brief review, in itself a remarkable *tour de force*, with what could be called a quasi-Kantian presentation of certain elementary truths. He argues, for example, that sound and light are representations of the one who hears and sees. Sound and light as such do not exist independently of the one hearing and seeing. Of themselves they would only be waves or motion. Yet he will also insist that our world of representation is not arbitrary, for that which is material is not as such merely subject to will (47). This involuntary character obliges us to affirm the existence of independent causes which, given our phenomenal world of representation, must interact with one another.<sup>20</sup> For him, "the essence that generates them must also constitute a certain multiplicity, or it could not contain the sufficient ground or cause of the given phenomena" (48). In alluding in various ways to early Greek philosophers, he goes on to speak of this general foundation as an aggregate of eternal and immutable elementary entities or causes, as indivisible atoms. These atoms he in turn describes as that in which the phenomenal world is real. He again appeals to our sense perception, this time of hardness, to argue that there is a cause of this sense of hardness. So atoms are forces which bring about this sensation of hardness or any sensation. They are active forces moving outward from themselves. Yet they are as well passive. We act upon something in movement, and we receive from others in representation. He goes on to say that these forces have reality for themselves as well, what we call consciousness, so they are entities. Solovyov seems to be thinking here in a Fichtean way as he works to explain interaction. With reference to Leibniz he goes on to call these entities monads and argues to interaction among them. Each fundamental entity making up the content of the absolute principle is qualitatively different from every other such entity or there would be no interaction among them (49–51).

Solovyov closes the fourth lecture with several concluding remarks. Platonism agrees with Buddhism that the world is not true. But he then says that such a claim can be seen as untrue only if there is another reality that is true. Whatever is found in the untrue natural world must be found in the true realm. This realm is "therefore determined not simply as an idea but as the ideal *all*, as the world of ideas, the realm of ideas" (52).<sup>21</sup> He illustrates this point by referring to that which characterizes the human person. A person is a natural phenomenon with actions and receptions externally determined. Yet each person is somehow unique, beyond all external determinations and thus something absolute. This absolute character determines the individual human person in all which that person does. Solovyov then returns to the relation between fundamental entities. He proposes that there is something common to them, something which is itself a particular idea or fundamental entity, resulting in a complex organism of entities. And so on with other such organisms whose center lies in a still more general idea.<sup>22</sup> The general and broadest idea is one which must include within itself other ideas. "This is the idea of absolute goodness, or more precisely, absolute love. . . . Absolute love is precisely that ideal all, that all-integrity, which constitutes the proper content of the divine principle" (53).<sup>23</sup>

In the first half of lecture five (54–64), Solovyov prolongs his presentation made in lecture four on the world or domain of ideas. At the same time, his continuing remarks on ideas form a transition to Jewish monotheism. He moves more or less in five steps in this transition from idea to person, with reference to the latter then opening the way to his reflection on Judaism and divine personhood. In briefly highlighting selected aspects of this multi-step move, we should note that in a first step (54–57) he speaks of entities as being the synthesis of atom, living force (monad), and idea. He takes up the question of the one and the many as he argues, in various ways, that entities are both single and multiple. They are atoms, but also forces interacting. Given that entities are, most importantly, determined by their ideal content, there is "an internal connection among all entities, by virtue of which the system of entities is an *organism of life*" (56–57).

In a second step (57–59) in this transition to Judaism, Solovyov recalls his earlier assertion of a certain correspondence between ideal cosmos and our rational concepts. Particular entities are embraced by more general ones and specific concepts by generic ones. He uses this reference then not only to show this continuity but also to distinguish the ways interrelationships occur among rational concepts and among essential ideas (57). Whereas

concepts become more inclusive through abstraction from particular details, essential ideas become more inclusive and broader to the extent that they have a richer content. The greater number of particular ideas with which a more general idea interacts, the fuller and more determinate is the general idea. Solovyov defines ideas as “perfectly determinate, special forms of metaphysical entities that are not the product of our abstracting thought but are inherent to the entities themselves” (59).

Solovyov’s third step (59–63) in this transition from idea to person consists basically in his distinguishing among three ways of knowing: sense perception of phenomena and experience; rational or abstract thinking; and, intellectual intuition. To illustrate what he means by intuition in particular, he appeals to artistic creation. For him art has a close linkage with what he calls the metaphysical world of ideal entities. Artistic ideas and images are not the result of one’s perception or reflection. Rather, they “*appear* to mental vision all at once, in their inner wholeness” (62).

In a fourth step (63–64) leading to his presentation on Judaism, Solovyov refers again to absolute love as expressing the notion that there is an inner connection among all ideas within absolute love as itself one all-embracing idea. It is by nature “the concentrated expression of the all; it is the all as unity” (63). For Solovyov this unity can only be real if what is united has its own autonomy, for entities are not only ideas but also monads and atoms. Without multiplicity the unity could not be actual but would only be potential. For the all-one to be its full unity it must not only be the unity of others but also that unity in itself. “*The all-one idea must be the proper determination of the one central entity*” (64).<sup>24</sup>

In a brief fifth and final step (64–65), Solovyov recalls that the idea is objective as the object of intuition by the other. The bearer of that idea must be an independent center for itself, possessing self-consciousness and personality. So the bearer of the idea is for Solovyov a person. Applying this notion that person and idea stand in relationship to one another and need one another, Solovyov finds that we herewith are given the idea of the living God. “God is all.” Just as every entity says “I am” in relation to its determinate essence, so “the divine being affirms its ‘I am’ not with respect to any separate particular content but with respect to the *all*, that is, first with respect to the absolute, all-one, and all-embracing idea, and through it and in it, also with respect to all the separate ideas that constitute the scope and content of the absolute idea” (64–65).

At this point, Solovyov turns in the second half or part of the fifth lecture (65–72) to the Bible, Moses, and Jewish monotheism.<sup>25</sup> At the

beginning of this second part he succinctly summarizes the trajectory traced so far. He recalls that in Buddhism the divine principle was understood negatively, as nirvana or nothingness. In Greek idealism it was determined objectively, the ideal all. In Jewish monotheism it "receives an inner subjective determination as the pure "I" or the absolute person" (65). But Buddhism and Greek idealism only affirmed a content and not the divine principle in itself, for an idea is actual only in as it is the content of something which is. Divinity, so understood only as a content, has nothing to offer the human will. Solovyov says that for the Greeks Divinity was ultimately considered objectively, impersonally, and without a will, merely the object of contemplation. But to have a positive moral value, "a religion must reveal Divinity as a willing person, whose will gives the supreme norm to the human will" (66). And this is what Old Testament revelation has done.

Solovyov then takes up the question, so hotly discussed in nineteenth-century German thought, as to whether or not the absolute can be a person. He says that those who say the Divinity is only a person and, thus limited, take up a position against which Pantheists rightfully rebel. Divinity as the absolute is more than a person. But he likewise notes that those who deny divine personhood fail in the opposite direction in that they see the Divinity as impersonal substance. For even, as substance, Divinity must assert its own being or there would be no container, as Solovyov says, no inner independence. It is necessary for Divinity to involve "self-determination and self-discernment; it must possess personhood and consciousness" (66–67). Divinity is free from personal being not because it lacks personal being but because it is not exhausted by it and contains it within.

The fifth lecture comes to a close with further remarks concerning the advance Judaism represents over Hellenism and with a final reference to the full truth of Old Testament revelation. For the understanding of God as absolute "I" and personal will brings with it, if this understanding does not undergo, further developed, a notion of God as arbitrary author of law binding upon the human will. Solovyov appeals to the prophetic tradition in Judaism, especially as found in Isaiah and Jeremiah, to show that this notion of law was meant to be transitory. As absolute, the will of God cannot be linked to any specific external object or act, ceremony or activity for its object. "Its object . . . can only be the all" (70). God's will excludes none. Solovyov sees God's will as love, as loving all, and thus able to serve no longer as external force but now as inner law for the human will. "The will of God must be the law and norm for the human will, not as *acknowledged despotism* but as the *consciously chosen good*." Prophetic

revelation announces that external law is replaced by a new relationship, a new and nonexclusive covenant through which humankind and through it nature are renewed (71).

With the sixth and seventh lectures we arrive at Solovyov's core presentation of Trinity. Here he presupposes and builds upon what he had said in his previous lectures.<sup>26</sup> He opens the sixth lecture, as he often does more generally in these lectures, with a helpful summary (73–74) of certain aspects of what he had spoken about so far but especially in the previous lecture. He does this, however, not simply to help in following what he is saying, but also as a further step in his overall argument. He of course recalls that in Judaism prophecy provided a corrective to a possible reading of God the personal divine "I" as arbitrarily imposing his will in an external fashion. He notes parenthetically that this earlier Jewish understanding of God seems to some extent at least to characterize a Muslim view of God. For Solovyov, Jewish prophecy identified God as love and thus as will which appears as norm internal to humans, freely inviting them to respond. With this notion of God as love, which insight fittingly arose in relation to one nation, God becomes the God of all and salvation is available to all. For divine love is not exclusive. However, he reiterates as well that the Greeks had brought us to the realization that the divine idea or content is itself universal. So now the task becomes one of bringing the universal "I" and the universal idea or essence into a synthesis: "If the truth of Divinity consists in the unity of God as an existing being, or the absolute subject, with His absolute essence, or objective idea, then this unity, this inner relation of the two elements (the personal and the essential) in Divinity must be conceived in a certain manner, must be defined" (74).

This synthesis occurs, according to Solovyov, when the Jewish and Greek worlds collide in Alexandria among Jews who received a Hellenistic education. He names especially Philo and Plotinus. The Neo-Platonists argued philosophically to a trinity of three divine hypostases. But Christianity came to an understanding of Trinity on the basis of a lived experience. For in Christianity the divine life appeared in a living person. Christians saw the *Logos* in the crucified and risen Jesus and experienced directly the Spirit as the cause of their spiritual regeneration (75). So the early Church Fathers quite naturally turned to Greek and Greco-Judaic thinkers as they reflected on the divine principle. Solovyov then describes what he intends to do during the rest of this lecture six. He will focus on the essential truth of the trinitarian doctrine and bring forth truth in what he calls a logical form meeting reason's requirements (77).

Solovyov carries out his logical development of the notion of Trinity in four main steps. First, he discusses the relationship of divine subject to divine content (77–79). Second, he argues to three modes of divine existence (79–84). Third, he turns to a consideration of our triadic structure as human beings (84–86). And, fourth, he further clarifies his notion of Trinity. He does this by distinguishing between the ways in which God and humans manifest a threefold structure of being (86–95). He analyses the temporal character of the triadic structure of human consciousness (86–87) and argues to three eternal subjects (87–88) which do not equal three gods (88–89) and are not to be thought of in any merely mechanical way (89–95).

In discussing the relationship between divine subject and divine content, Solovyov creatively identifies existence with subject as existent subject and essence with content. Subject gives rise to and expresses itself in and as content, which two, namely, subject and content, he later on also identifies respectively with God the Father and God the Son. Here he no longer ties consideration of the relationship between existence and essence with the divine as substance, as had been done so often in prior philosophical and theological reflection. He now thinks in terms of subjectivity, arguing that to say God is and God exists is to say in fact that God is a “What.” If, on the one hand there were no “What,” God would simply be being in general which, as he acknowledges Hegel had shown, is simply nothing (78). On the other hand God cannot be only something and limited to a particular content, for then God would not be absolute. He concludes that God must be the all in a positive, inclusive sense. Otherwise there would be something outside of God limiting God externally, and God would then not be God.

Once he has established the distinction between divine subject and divine content, with the distinction between subject and content being in fact characteristic of all entities, Solovyov builds upon this distinction to argue to three modes of divine existence. He will base his argument on the three different ways in which the all-total is present in the Divinity as God's content or essence. He sets up a guiding principle, namely, that if the all represents God's essence or content, then God as existent subject must be distinguished from it, “what expresses from what is expressed, *oneself from one's own*. And this distinction is a relation.” For this content to be God's own, God must manifest it and “possess it substantially, that is, He must be all or the unity of all in an eternal inner act.” In this first positing we have God as existent is actual and his content “exists only in a latent state, potentially” (79). Without this content existing in God at least potentially,

God as existent would be nothing. But then, for this universal essence to be actual it must exist not only in God but also for God as distinct from Him.

With this affirmation Solovyov has arrived at the second mode or positing of divine existence. Here the all-total is no longer present as potential in a latent state, but "as a certain ideal *actuality* . . . posited as an object." This object is of course not external to the divine subject since it is absolute. It is, rather, the subject's own inner content. Solovyov recalls again, by way of explanatory example or incomplete analogy, the artistic idea which, when realized, is the externalization for the artist of what he or she is within, namely, the idea. This second mode of existence is a different expression of what is in the first mode. Solovyov then reflects further on the nature of the first positing in which only the existent subject is actual. "This absolute subject, as unitary, is pure act, pure absolute actuality" (80). He says we can gain some insight into this first positing by referring to a deeply spiritual experience in which we abstract from all forms of impression, feeling, and the like. There we come into contact with the spiritual source of spiritual life and of the universal life. In what has the ring of an appeal to a form of mystical experience, he says that "we come to know God essentially, as the first principle, or the substance of all. We come to know God the Father" (81).

Solovyov returns to the second positing, the second mode of existence, as he insists that the first positing would, without the second positing, be unable to act. There would be no object for which it could appear as "a positive possibility or force, since, *in itself*, it is actuality" (81). For the absolute to be fully absolute, it cannot be only actuality but must also be potentiality or power without limitation by another. The absolute, to be absolute, must become "actual not only in itself but also for itself" (82) through self-determination. The true one is that which not only is one in itself but produces multiplicity for itself, within itself, without then being disrupted in its unity. At this point, Solovyov asserts, in the briefest of fashions, a third positing or mode of existence. The first is immediate and indifferent. The second manifested through differentiation "and it is thereby *intensified*. . . . Thus, we have here the *third positing*, or mode, of that which absolutely is—the mode of a perfect unity, of the absolute that has asserted itself *as such*." Solovyov then describes these three positings or relations succinctly. The first possesses content in nondifferentiated unity including all in absolute power. The second opposes its own absolute content to itself by self-determination. The third asserts its own content by "realizing itself in an actual, mediated, or differentiated unity with this content, or essence, that



is, with the *all*—in other words, as finding itself in its other, as eternally returning to itself and remaining ‘at home with itself’ ” (83).

Solovyov's next major move will be to identify these three modes of divine existence as three subjects. But first, to facilitate the transition from mode to subject, he briefly sketches out the triadicity, similar to that of divine existence, which is necessarily to be found in the human spirit. He first of all identifies what he calls states of our consciousness, by which he means all desires, thoughts, and feelings which we experience consciously. He then insists that there are other states of consciousness constituting us as spirit, and which are not tied to the external or internal world. He gives some examples, referring to sleep and loss of consciousness. Since our spirit perdures beyond determinate states of consciousness, it would be absurd, he argues, not to recognize this deeper spiritual form of consciousness. So Solovyov speaks of the primordial, indivisible, and integral subject in whom our identity is there only substantially, “in immediate unity with the subject as its inner idea, an idea as yet unrevealed and unembodied.” We have, secondly, of course as well our differentiated conscious life wherein our spirit is revealed and our content or essence “exists *actually*, in a multiplicity of diverse manifestations” (85). Thirdly, these various manifestations are “disclosures of one and the same spirit present in all of them.” Solovyov appeals to the fact that we can reflect upon these manifestations and come to be a single subject. He identifies this assertion as self-consciousness. In it our spirit asserts the content as its own and in so doing “asserts itself as that which has manifested this content” (86).

Solovyov acknowledges the correspondence between, on the one hand, the triadic relation of the human subject to its content and, on the other hand, that of the absolute subject to its absolute content. But of course, the parallel goes no further, given the temporal character of the triadic structure of human consciousness. For Solovyov we cannot at the same time be conscious at the predeterminate and deeper level as well as be conscious in a determinate way. He says we cannot both think and think about our own thought (at the same time) (87). For Solovyov, these three positings or modes of existence characterize a single human subject.

In continuing to clarify his notion of Trinity, Solovyov now distinguishes between the ways in which a time-conditioned human subject and the eternal subject manifest a threefold structure of being as he argues to three eternal subjects. The very concept of absolute entity excludes the possibility of a temporally based “alternation of its three positings, or of the three relations to its essence or content.” Again, we cannot think of

one subject as having three exclusive positings. "One and the same eternal subject cannot at the same time conceal *in itself* all its determinations, and manifest them *for itself*, separating them from itself as its other, and still remain in them 'at home with itself'" (87). We must then assume three eternal subjects (*hypostases*), the second proceeding from the first and the third from the first as having already manifested itself in the second. God would not be God if God did not have the absolute content not only as potentially present but also for himself and with himself (88).<sup>27</sup>

Yet monotheism will not permit the assertion of three gods. Solovyov says that if we are thinking of any subject which simply participates in the divine essence we have many gods. But if we think of God as the One who is in total possession of the divine content, then the three divine subjects can be called God only insofar as they exist in absolute unity. It is only in our abstracting thought that the three divine subjects exist separately. God the Father cannot exist without the Word expressing him and the Spirit asserting him. The Word and the Spirit cannot exist without the first subject, their common source. "God . . . actualizes Himself in three indivisible and consubstantial subjects (hypotheses). (89)

Solovyov dedicates the rest of this sixth lecture to presenting further remarks giving greater precision to his logical presentation of Trinity as found so far especially in this lecture. He first of all distinguishes between, on the one hand, merely mechanical thinking that separates and considers entities in their separateness and, on the other hand, organic thinking that considers "an object in its all-sided wholeness and, consequently, in its inner bond with all the other objects" (89–90).<sup>28</sup> He identifies this organic thinking with the intellectual or ideal intuition he had discussed in his previous lecture. While saying that rational knowledge of the divine content present in three ways within the Trinity is knowable by reason, he agrees that there is a specific sense in which the Trinity is unknowable by that same reason. As existent and individual subjects the three modes of divine being are in themselves unknowable, as is any entity in its singular individual existence. He returns briefly to his earlier remarks on the triunity of finite human beings, noting that inner analogies arising from a consideration of spiritual beings serve not to prove the truth of God's triunity but as examples that can help us understand better (93). He takes a moment to present conditions for a real analogy. Triunity must be the inner law of the life of what is being considered as reference for an analogy and characterize the very essence of what is being considered. Furthermore, Triunity must "follow from unity and unity must follow from trinity" (94). With regard

to essential significance, he cites Leibniz as originally pointing this out with full clarity, and attributes a major role to this notion in German Idealism. With reference to triunity following from unity and vice versa, he brings up the example of Augustine who in the *Confessions* writes, as Solovyov sums it up, of differentiating simple immediate being (*esse*), its knowledge (*scire*), and its will (*velle*). Solovyov says these three acts are identical in content in that there is one subject and each of these, namely, being, knowing, and willing include the other two. He sees in Augustine's example a natural transition to his further consideration, in the next lecture, of the particular relation of each divine subject to the one divine essence or idea which each subject "actualizes" and in which they are themselves "concretely actualized" (94–95).

As has proven customary for Solovyov over the course of these lectures, he opens the seventh lecture with a concise, confirmatory summary of what he said in the previous lecture. We must acknowledge three consubstantial subjects and indivisible subjects in the divine principle as absolute content. Each subject has the same content possessed in its own way. The first is spirit "immediately existing as absolute substance." The second is the Word, the eternal manifestation of the first. The third is the Spirit "returning to itself and thereby closing the circle of divine being." He has referred to these three subjects in more logical terms as being-in-itself, being-for-itself, and being-at-home-with-itself. Now in the seventh lecture he proposes to speak more concretely of them, working out, as he says, their more meaningful determination (96).

Given our primary interest in identifying possible German Idealist influence on Solovyov's trinitarian thought, we need not review here in detail the various steps in Solovyov's tightly presented and argued effort to give a more particular determination to each of the three subjects. We will, however, want to note his creative description of these subjects in terms of will, representation, and feeling along with their absolute content or object considered, respectively, as goodness, truth, and beauty. We shall note as well his initial reference to Christ and wisdom, respectively, as active and passive sides to what he calls the divine world. With this remark he will bring the lecture to a close.

In this seventh lecture, Solovyov first recalls a basic principle, namely, that "if determinate being is a certain relation of that which is, or the subject, to its essence, or content, the modes of that relation are the modes of being" (96). Following through with this basic principle, he describes three ways in which the subject is related to its content. In the first case, what I

posit is at the same time my own and yet object distinct from me. Here the essence is both that which is and its other is that other “only potentially, or by its tendency,” what Solovyov then calls will. For that which is to desire its other, that other must be distinguished from the will of that which is and in some way be given to that which is. It must represent that which is, so we have, secondly, “the being of that which is . . . determined not only as will but as representation.” The represented essence also manifests will in that it has the capacity to act on that which represents. The two in so acting “become sensitized to, or capable of, feeling each other.” Solovyov calls this interaction, as the third mode of being, “feeling” (97). In line, then, with the basic principle that that which is is simply its relation with its content, that which is is will, representation, and feeling.

Solovyov makes reference to our own experience of these three modes of being and distinguishes them from modes of divine being. In this way, he is able further to clarify his understanding of divine being in its relationship with absolute content. He identifies the content, or other, appropriate to each of the three modes of divine being as, respectively, goodness, truth, and beauty. Strictly speaking, he insists that the content or divine idea remains ever the all-total. But now that all-total can be described in relation to will<sup>29</sup> as goodness, in relation to representation as truth, and in relation to feeling as beauty. The unity of that which is of course already contains goodness, truth, and beauty within it. Yet, they must also be separated out from their initial indeterminacy and considered separately, though they remain always interrelated, one not there without the other two. That which is is, first, preeminently willing, second, preeminently representing, and, third, preeminently feeling (100). He calls the three subjects, respectively, primordial spirit, intellect, and soul. He further insists that the content of the divine idea as goodness, as truth, and as beauty is simply the all, different only in “the mode of containment (formal differences)” (102). In his creative reworking of what is traditionally referred to as transcendentals or universal characteristics of being, Solovyov has distributed the notions of goodness, truth, and beauty among the three divine subjects, Father, Son, and Spirit. With love understood as inner unity, he says that goodness represents unity more fully than the others, given its mode of more potential realization (103). Truth is love as objectively represented, and beauty is love as made available to the senses. In their interpenetration, goodness, truth, and beauty form a new concrete unity, which we find in Christianity (104).

Solovyov recalls the four forms of religious consciousness: pessimism and asceticism, especially found in Buddhism; idealism or an ideal world

beyond material reality, clearly represented in Plato; monotheism or the "absolute principle or the positive subject as the I, in Judaism"; and, the absolute principle's determination as Trinity, in Alexandrian theosophy. In Christianity Trinity becomes the central focus, and Christianity includes within itself the four different forms of religious consciousness not in an eclectic fashion but in a new and integrated way. That is, in Christianity the divine content is realized in a concrete way in the Christ who teaches that he himself is "the way, the truth and the life [John 14:6]" (105). The content of Christianity is Christ himself.

Solovyov goes on to argue that God is an organism, with multiplicity in God being reduced to a wholeness. He works with a general principle that, given the interrelatedness of elements in an organism, the more elements in an organism the more determinate it is. So the most inclusive organism is the most universal organism and thus the most individual. "This individual entity, the actualized expression of the absolutely existent God, is Christ." Given as well that there are in every organism two unities, namely, that which actively reduces multiplicity to oneness and multiplicity reduced to unity, "there is the unity that produces and the unity that is produced" (107). With this distinction Solovyov introduces his view of the divine organism of Christ as being constituted by the absolute as such, namely, an active principle, the Word, or *Logos* bringing multiplicity to unity and by the absolute's content or produced unity, which he here identifies as *Sophia* or wisdom. *Logos* and *Sophia* are both distinct and internally related. "This unity, Christ, as the integral divine organism, both universal and individual, is both *Logos* and *Sophia*" (108).

Referring back then to God more generally, Solovyov acknowledges many would claim that considering God as integral being, as inclusive living organism, would threaten the absoluteness of Divinity. In response he argues that if one would not "acknowledge in Him [God] His *own* distinctive eternal nature, His own distinctive eternal world" (108–9), one would be conceiving of God as more abstract and poorer than the world. Considering God as an empty abstraction ultimately leads to atheism.

To God, then, belong both unity and multiplicity, including "the multiplicity of substantial ideas, of potencies or forces with a determinate, particular content" (109). Solovyov here speaks especially of forces in general and then, more specifically, of three forces in the divine world. He seems to be laying the groundwork for a more clearly constructed trinitarian metaphysics, for these forces establish three spheres within the divine world, spheres in which the force actualizing the content "can have this

content as an object of will, or contain it as what is willed; it can represent it; and finally, it can feel it." These forces can "relate to the determinate content, or idea, substantially, ideally, and really, or sensuously." He speaks respectively of the will (the moral principle), representation (the theoretical principle), or feeling (the aesthetic principle). These three spheres in the divine world are, then, respectively composed of pure spirits, intellects, and souls—three closely united spheres in which each fulfills the other. "Thus, a single, unbreakable bond of love unites all the countless elements that form the divine world" (110).

Solovyov brings the seventh lecture to a close by opening on to the prolonged constructive reflection on humanity which he will carry out in the following lectures. Here he simply argues that access to this rich divine world is available only to those who pertain to it. And he finds them in human beings, who can enter into that world by intellectual intuition (110).

Over the course of the following three lectures Solovyov develops at length his understanding of the human being not merely as either an agglomeration of individuals or simply individual human beings. Rather, he focuses on the ideal human being as such or, perhaps more exactly, the idea of the human being, humanity (114–15). In the eighth lecture he speaks of various questions concerning humanity as the necessarily eternally presupposed receiver of God's act of self-othering (114), and ends the lecture with an argument in favor of human immortality. In the ninth lecture, he takes up at length the questions of human freedom, evil, and suffering. Human freedom will become for Solovyov a most important consideration since for him human beings must be free in their identifying with the divine in the development of divine humanity (for example, 132).<sup>30</sup> And in the tenth lecture, Solovyov presents a dense and compact, indeed quite rich, reading of the movement from an original fall from unity toward a renewed all-unity, a reading reminiscent of Teilhard de Chardin's later constructive reading of the universe as an increasingly complex process of unification.<sup>31</sup> In his presentation, Solovyov sees the movement toward all-unity as taking place in two phases of incarnation, taken first in a wide sense and then more traditionally, of the divine principle. First, a cosmogonic process in which there is a development through various stages of material development culminating in humans. And, second, a theogonic process in which there is a movement from earliest forms of religious consciousness on through those of Buddhism, the Greek and Roman worlds, and Judaism (for example, 141). He ends the lecture with reference to the crucial moment toward which these two processes lead, namely, the arrival of a unique individual:

With the arrival of "truth . . . embodied in a living force" and the eternal truth "concentrated in one living person . . . a deified human, the Roman Caesar—it is then that God's truth appeared—in the living person of God incarnate in humanity, Jesus Christ" (154).

In the final two lectures, eleven and twelve published together, Solovyov moves in whirlwind but fascinating fashion through what we might call Christology and ecclesiology. In each case he builds upon, and works in a coherent way with, what he has said in the previous lectures. We should note that in his Christological argument he first succinctly announces his Christological project: "In the sphere of eternal divine being, Christ is the eternal spiritual center of the universal organism. This organism, or universal humankind, falling into the stream of phenomena, became subject to the law of external being and, by labor and suffering, had to restore in time that which it lost in eternity: its inner unity with God and nature" (155).

The rest of his creative Christological reflection consists in an examination, first, of the possibility of the real union of Divinity with humankind and then the way in which that union occurs (156). He argues that a new unity between the divine principle and the natural one in humankind had to take place in a single person or it would not be real. In Christ then there had to be two wills, with the divine will renouncing itself to make room for the human will freely to embrace the divine will (158–59). Solovyov further develops this thought by bringing into consideration the three temptations of Christ, namely, making material welfare (bread) the goal, the "self-assertion of human personality" or the sin of pride (having the angels protect Christ in a fall), and using "one's divine power to force the world into subjection." In this way Christ divinizes his humanity in freely subordinating his human will to the divine will after having humanized his divine will in the incarnation. This inner self-renunciation must be followed by an external renunciation as well, hence the suffering and death of Christ (161–63).

Solovyov makes a transition from Christology to ecclesiology by referring to "ideal humankind as the body of the divine Logos" in the eternal world and the Church as "the body of the Logos incarnate, that is, of the Logos historically individuated in the divine-human person of Jesus Christ" (164). Then, in applying again the three temptations this time to the social aggregate of humankind, he argues, among various observations, that the Roman hierarchy gave in to the temptation to rule by force rather than to work for moral improvement through free assent.<sup>32</sup> He notes that Protestantism corrected this approach, but that it naturally passed into

Rationalism, the idea that “human reason is a law unto itself . . . the pride of the mind.” He calls this the essence of German philosophy and notes its complete realization in Hegel, with “a failure just as complete” (168). This domination by reason was then replaced by an effort falsely to see all in terms of materialism and empiricism (166, see 166–69).

In his final remarks, Solovyov widens his reflection to cover, at least in principle, the whole of Western and Eastern ecclesial and philosophical thought. Though he insists on the ultimate failure of Western thought, he sees the importance of the West in having developed the human principle. He sees the East, and especially Russia, as having preserved the focus on the divine principle but, regrettably, without having developed the “spontaneous human principle, which is necessary for the perfection of this truth [Christ’s truth, Divine humanity]” (172). When the human principle recognizes its utter helplessness, it can “enter into a free union with the divine foundation of Christianity, preserved in the Eastern Church, and . . . give birth to a spiritual humankind” (174, see 170–74).

### An Eastern Testimonial to Idealist Influence

It is reported that Solovyov himself described his philosophy as concrete Idealism.<sup>33</sup> He interweaves philosophy and theology, in line with many Eastern Christian and more generally Eastern philosophical approaches. He does this while himself proceeding in his reflections on the basis of reasoned argument.<sup>34</sup> We can gain some first insight into what he meant by concrete Idealism if we recall that he insisted on facticity, positive facts, and existence (76), which cannot be grasped by logic or reason as such and can be asserted only on the basis of faith (31). We should note as well that he affirmed the ideal existence of a content, essence, or idea, knowable by intellectual intuition, of each actually existing entity. This ideal existence was located in the divine world which itself served as the content, essence, or idea of the second existent divine subject identified as Word or *Logos*.<sup>35</sup> For Solovyov, concrete Idealism would seem to refer to, and describe, his doubled insistence on each real entity’s particular facticity or actual existence and that entity’s ideal existence in the Divinity.

Though Vasily Vasilevich Zenkovsky does not use the term “concrete Idealism” in his important study, *A History of Russian Philosophy*, he recognizes the strong Idealist cast to Solovyov’s thought as he helpfully identifies a series of more philosophical as well as other influences on Solovyov.<sup>36</sup>



He describes Solovyov's task as one of developing an organic synthesis in which Solovyov brings together in integrated fashion elements from many and varied sources.<sup>37</sup> With reference to those more philosophical sources, Zenkovsky cites both Western and Russian thinkers,<sup>38</sup> though for present purposes we will focus on Western philosophers.

It should not be surprising that Solovyov would be well acquainted with the thought of various Western philosophers and, in particular, with that of post-Kantian German Idealist thought. The latter was already well-known in the university where his father, a recognized historian, taught.<sup>39</sup> Now, as we explore the influence of Idealist thought on Solovyov, it will prove enlightening to consider first of all Zenkovsky's evaluation, along with that of several others, of the influence of various philosophical positions and especially that of post-Kantian German Idealists on Solovyov's thought more generally considered. Zenkovsky shows himself particularly well situated to appreciate Solovyov's thinking and writing. Beginning with Zenkovsky will then provide a context within which we can look in more specific fashion at post-Kantian Idealist influence on Solovyov's trinitarian thought. This approach, starting with such a more general focus, will be especially helpful in light of the fact that Solovyov worked assiduously to develop a coherent, almost seamless, religious metaphysics applicable across the broad spectrum of reality, whether divine or cosmic or human. What can be said of his overall thought can readily be said as well, at least in principle, of his more explicitly trinitarian thought.<sup>40</sup> Sampling Zenkovsky's identification of various sources with which Solovyov worked to develop his own creative religious metaphysical synthesis will in effect help us come to understand the wide scope of Solovyov's interests. It will, as mentioned, also set the stage for specific remarks on Idealist influence, and consequent impact on, Solovyov's trinitarian thought.

Zenkovsky succinctly states that Solovyov "deduced his metaphysics from the general doctrine of the Absolute; and [that] here he combined Schelling and Spinoza in an original way, engrafting Platonic elements at certain points."<sup>41</sup> In pointing to Spinoza, Zenkovsky speaks of him as Solovyov's first philosophical love, the one who provided Solovyov not only with "a living sense of God's reality but a clear 'experience of the spiritual total unity of the world.'"<sup>42</sup> Zenkovsky alerts the reader as well to the influence of Kant and Schopenhauer, with Solovyov apparently having read Schopenhauer before Fichte<sup>43</sup> and before Hegel and Schelling as well.<sup>44</sup> He stresses Hegel's influence on Solovyov in the area of historicity, where Solovyov usually constructs his historical syntheses "in the forms of the Hegelian dialectic."<sup>45</sup>

According to Zenkovsky, Solovyov reinterpreted Hegel's idea of the end of history as the "glory of Sophiology. The 'end of history' is the Kingdom of God, i.e. the complete union of the 'Absolute in process of becoming' with the First Principle."<sup>46</sup> Solovyov took over both formal dialectical method and rationalism from Hegel.<sup>47</sup> But of course we should add that Solovyov worked with dialectic more widely taken and often in the form of a movement of consciousness, and indeed religious consciousness, rather than as a movement of conceptual thought. Still, Zenkovsky sees Solovyov working "wholly in the spirit of Hegel" when he holds that historical and logical order "coincide in their *content*, i.e. in their inner connection."<sup>48</sup>

Zenkovsky's following insightful and more specific remark complements the citation above concerning Solovyov's deducing his general metaphysics from Spinoza and Schelling: "In particular, one senses very clearly a *twofold* series of ideas in Solovyov's metaphysics: on the one hand, the doctrine of the Absolute as a 'total-unity,' and the generation by the Absolute of its 'other,' dominates all of his metaphysical constructions. Here Solovyov drew inspiration from the doctrines of Spinoza and Schelling, which had captivated him in his youth."<sup>49</sup> For Zenkovsky, the most important of all these influences was that of Schelling.<sup>50</sup> From Schelling, for example, Solovyov integrated ideas such as that of there being two Absolutes, poles, or principles (and of course from Fichte as well in that Fichte had spoken of the "I" and the "not-I"). Zenkovsky notes that the idea of, to use his words, an Absolute in process of becoming is, however, rooted in the thought of Hegel.<sup>51</sup> Importantly, for Zenkovsky, Solovyov works with Schelling's notion of intellectual intuition.<sup>52</sup> Solovyov brings "together . . . the 'intellectual intuition of ideas' and artistic intuition—wholly in the spirit of early Schelling."<sup>53</sup> Continuing in line with Plato, Plotinus, and Schelling, Solovyov saw beauty not as an appearance but as a reality and thus as "an actual, transforming force."<sup>54</sup> He developed the Schellingian notion of world soul considerably beyond what Schelling had done with it.<sup>55</sup> Zenkovsky sees Solovyov as learning of three forms of knowledge from Spinoza, namely, "experience, reason, and the 'mystical realm,' corresponding to the three kinds of being (phenomena, the realm of ideas, and absolute being)." This leads Solovyov to make his own several of Schelling's "epistemological ideas."<sup>56</sup> To these remarks by Zenkovsky concerning Schelling's influence on Solovyov or, perhaps better put in this case, concerning Schelling as source with which Solovyov worked, we should add that Solovyov made his own Schelling's stress on existence. He saw existence as that which is not deducible from conceptual thought (92). Solovyov stressed will as well

as freedom in its relationship with and as a form of necessity. Though on this last point, namely, freedom in relation to necessity, Solovyov did not insist as strongly as Schelling had on the role of free decision in relation to the nontemporal arising of each of the three modes of divine being. We could add that Solovyov worked with the more general post-Kantian German Idealist understanding of the self not as substance but as subject, and especially with the Hegelian and Schellingian views of the subject as dynamically developing.<sup>57</sup>

In addition to Zenkovsky's remarks especially concerning the influence of Schelling on Solovyov, Michael Aksionov Meerson draws attention to several further points that he holds Solovyov learned from Schelling. These were "the concept of nature as a manifestation of the absolute, the concept of the world-soul, the view of the universe as 'a unified self-developing and self-organizing super-organism,' the idea of the Absolute as 'total unity,' and the concept of God's humanity (Godmanhood, *bogochelovechestvo*)."<sup>58</sup> Meerson goes on to note that it was Schelling who said philosophy's true task is cognition of the Absolute. Meerson says Solovyov faults Schelling for not having worked out a truly dialectical development and cites Hegel as having accomplished this. "Though following the formal rules of Hegel's dialectic, Solovyov radically changes its content by replacing Hegel's idea of being with his concept of the existent (subject)."<sup>58</sup>

In this brief review of philosophical sources of Solovyov's overall philosophy, we will do well to complement Zenkovsky's and Meerson's remarks with those of George L. Kline as found in a paper, "Hegel and Solovyov."<sup>59</sup> He read this paper at the 1972 Hegel Society of America Conference. He focuses more on the early Solovyov and enters into some rather detailed distinctions between what Hegel said and what Solovyov ended up saying. For present purposes we can remain with his more general remarks concerning Solovyov in relation to Hegel. Kline refers to Solovyov as "the most systematic and original of the Russian neo-Hegelians," his early systematic thought being "profoundly influenced by Hegel."<sup>60</sup> Kline describes Solovyov's early work, *The Crisis of Western Philosophy*, as "a Hegelian taxonomy of historical philosophies in their dialectical interconnection and development."<sup>61</sup> In this work Solovyov sees the Western empiricist tradition or syllogism concluding with J. S. Mill and the Western rationalist tradition or syllogism climaxing with Hegel.<sup>62</sup> Solovyov's general conclusion was that, with Hegel, rationalist philosophy came to an end. Kline proposes that Solovyov's system "is a neo-Hegelian and, as compared to Hegel's own philosophy, a moderately de-Aristotelianized and heavily re-Platonized position. It attempts a universal

synthesis—not a Hegelian *Aufhebung*.” Solovyov takes seriously the Platonic triad of beauty, truth, and goodness.<sup>63</sup> Kline notes that, in contradistinction to Hegel, Solovyov with his notion of integral knowledge does not subordinate doing to knowing. We could add that here we see an example of Solovyov’s working with a quasi-Hegelian sense of dialectic, namely, with a more generalized movement from “in itself” to “for itself” to “in and for itself or being at home with itself,” but without tying that dialectic directly to and rooting it in a movement of conceptual thought.<sup>64</sup> Kline interestingly compares Solovyov’s working with a notion of wholeness and Hegel’s position on it: “Solovyov’s terms *tsel’nost’* (‘wholeness’) and *tsel’ny* (‘integral’) are stronger synonyms for Hegel’s ‘concreteness’ and ‘concrete.’ . . . In Hegel’s usage ‘concrete’ means ‘many-sided, adequately related, complexly mediated’; Solovyov’s *tsel’ny* seems, in addition, to connote ‘harmoniously unified.’”<sup>65</sup>

In Solovyov’s system the development seems more horizontal, with the three divine subjects interacting simultaneously within the eternal and as well as within the temporal realm. This sense of a more horizontal orientation can be seen as well in the point that the three major elements, so to speak, of each temporal entity structure that entity in a threefold way. In Hegel the movement seems more vertical, with the various moments or elements following one another dialectically and, in certain cases at least where history comes into play, temporally sequentially.<sup>66</sup> Kline sums up his stress on Hegel’s influence on Solovyov:

In his early works Solovyov was, as I have suggested, systematically Hegelian in metaphilosophy [especially Solovyov’s early study, *The Crisis of Western Philosophy*] and systematically neo-Hegelian in philosophy, even though he assigned Hegel a rather reduced role in the history of speculative thought. Later he came to confess his debt to Hegel more honestly and more openly. One of his last published works, a long encyclopedia article on Hegel, is both fair and sympathetic.<sup>67</sup>

Before turning directly to the more specific question of the influence and impact of post-Kantian German Idealism on Solovyov’s trinitarian thought, we can refer for a moment to Solovyov’s early work of 1874, *The Crisis of Western Philosophy*. Referring to this work will help us indicate, at least by citing numbers of references to various thinkers, his intimate knowledge of Kantian but, especially important here, post-Kantian German Idealism. Here in *Crisis* we find documentation confirming his profound

understanding of German Idealism, which will serve him well in his 1877–81 *Lectures on Divine Humanity*.

It is especially in the first chapter<sup>68</sup> of *Crisis* that Solovyov demonstrates his in-depth knowledge of Kantian and post-Kantian German Idealism. Yet he refers to and discusses Kant, Fichte, Hegel, and Schelling throughout the book. In it he names Kant around seventy-eight times as he discusses at some length various aspects of Kant's thought and implications of the various philosophical positions to which Kant argues. He identifies Fichte as the first to reject Kant's notion of the thing in-itself or *Ding an sich*, with Fichte thus introducing a move from thinking or consciousness to that which is known.<sup>69</sup> Over the course of *Crisis* Solovyov mentions Fichte at least nineteen times. In criticism of Fichte, he points out that the absolute act precedes our consciousness and that this "is the meaning given to Fichte's principle by his successor in philosophy Schelling."<sup>70</sup> He refers to Hegel explicitly at least eighty-four times, manifesting in the process an insightful understanding of Hegel's philosophy. Several times Solovyov criticizes it as one-sided, a rather strong criticism given Solovyov's interest in wholeness, an interest already discernible in this early study.<sup>71</sup> For Solovyov, Hegel's notion of the concept cannot tell us anything about whether something exists or not.<sup>72</sup> At first sight surprisingly, Solovyov refers explicitly to Schelling only about fourteen times. However, though he will make rather sweeping statements to the effect that Western philosophy as a whole is one-sided,<sup>73</sup> he will as well speak more positively of Schelling: "There appears [in Hegel's philosophy] that indeterminacy and fogginess of metaphorical expressions which Schelling, in his positive philosophy, was the first to notice and ridicule."<sup>74</sup> Such references and remarks by Solovyov lead us to think that he was influenced, in a substantial way, in his trinitarian thinking more by Schelling than Hegel. Still, he seems as well to have learned a great deal from Hegel and indeed from post-Kantian German Idealism in general.<sup>75</sup>

We have reviewed the question of the overall influence of several Western philosophers on Solovyov's thought and confirmed Solovyov's own profound understanding of post-Kantian German Idealism. This review and confirmation will permit us now to speak, in surer and more succinct fashion, of the influence and impact of Hegel, and of Schelling in particular, on Solovyov in his trinitarian thinking. It will be helpful to look at that thinking through the prism of his emphasis on the notions first of wholeness and then of development.

This post-Kantian German Idealist influence shows up especially well in the ways in which Solovyov conceived of and worked with his notion of

the whole, namely, the all, the all-one, and the all-unity. It is in effect this notion of the all as inclusive whole which provides the constant point of reference for his various constructive reflections on everything. Here we refer more especially to his reflections ranging in the *Lectures* from the history of religious consciousness to nature-oriented, human, ethical, and spiritual considerations. This notion of the "all" serves as the fundamental criterion on the basis of which and in line with which he works out his varied philosophical stance in relation to the whole host of ideas and positions with which he works and which he modifies as he uses them to build his own system. In working with this notion of the all and its various forms, Solovyov is surely reflecting his deeply rooted, perhaps partially pre-reflexive awareness and appreciation of the sense of wholeness and inclusiveness which we are told is so fundamental to the Russian psyche and overall outlook on reality.<sup>76</sup> Solovyov criticizes, for example, Neo-Platonism for its notion of oneness which does not include within itself multiplicity. For Solovyov the one gives rise to and includes within it the many, otherwise it is not truly one and leaves the many outside of it.

We see this idea of the one including the many made explicit in Solovyov's presentation on Trinity. In this presentation he insists that ideal multiplicity is to be found even in the eternal divine principle itself. Solovyov goes even further with his understanding of Trinity as inclusive wholeness when he insists that there must as well be a real multiplicity "outside" of God, hence the eternal creation of a temporal world. Following upon this notion of creation as the realization of multiplicity, Solovyov arrives at his notion of divine humanity, which is the Kingdom of God understood as inclusive divine-human reality. This divine-human reality is the final integration of the one and the many in the inclusive divine and human all-unity of God's humanity. It is of course true that Solovyov's rich notion of the all in its various forms is creatively constructed in dialogue with and drawing upon a wide variety of philosophical, theological, and mystical sources. Yet that notion would surely be unthinkable in the philosophically expressed forms it takes, and among them preeminently as Trinity, in Solovyov's thought without some recognition that Solovyov is working rather more directly with Hegel and Schelling. He is surely thinking of Hegel's own concept of the true infinite inclusive of finitude. He surely has as well in mind Schelling's notion of the final reestablishment of initial divine unity through what is, for Schelling, the interaction of three modes of divine being becoming three divine Persons in the realization of a renewed and enriched, inclusive divine unity.

Solovyov is particularly indebted to post-Kantian German Idealists, and especially Hegel and Schelling, for his insight that the all or inclusive whole can be such only if it develops from an original moment which is both whole and yet needs an other to come fully to be inclusive whole.<sup>77</sup> When Solovyov speaks more formally of this dynamic development, he tends to call upon Hegelian terminology to express this development, which latter he sees as at least formally and structurally speaking Hegelian in character. He refers to it as a movement from “in itself” to “for itself” to “being at home in itself.” As mentioned earlier, however, he of course works with this dynamic developing of the other to which the initial mode of being needs to give rise if the initial mode is to represent itself and include ideal multiplicity without defining this dynamically developing movement as one of pure conceptual thought. We will momentarily refer to this move by Solovyov as his embrace of Schelling’s critique of Hegel. Again, Solovyov recognizes the need for that which is represented and that which is representing to interact in such a way that the first and second modes give rise to a third mode. In this third mode that which represents is at home in that which is represented. In using such terms and describing Trinity in these terms, Solovyov gives his overall trinitarian thinking an at least initial and indeed continuing overall Hegelian cast.

However, Solovyov in effect embraces Schelling’s critique of Hegel when he insists that thinking, and indeed the wider notion of consciousness, requires a prior act. More precisely, Solovyov insists that there must be an initial existent subject logically prior to any movement of thought and to any content attributable to that subject. Without denying the Hegelian cast Solovyov has given to his trinitarian thought, we can affirm that with this doubled insistence he shifts to a more Schellingian understanding of the dynamic development of the divine principle as Trinity. While so adopting Schelling’s stance, Solovyov is still in fact acknowledging the importance of the previously more generally noted movement common to both Hegel and Schelling. That movement is one away from a substance-based to a subjectivity-based understanding of reality and, of special concern here, of the trinitarian God.

In so working with a subjectivity-based understanding of reality, Solovyov has in effect picked up on and made his own the notion of becoming and development so characteristic of the Idealist thought of both Hegel and Schelling.<sup>78</sup> Hegel had seen this development as a movement of inclusive subjectivity, inclusive in that it moved, as we have mentioned, from potentiality to actuality to necessity. This is simply a way of referring to his movement of thought from its first moment as, generally stated, “in itself”

or implicit to “for itself” or the explicitation of what was implicit in the first moment to “in and for itself” or the advancing resultant integration of what was previously merely implicit and explicit.<sup>79</sup> In Hegel this dynamic took the form, essentially, of a monosubjectively structured movement of subjectivity dialectically developing through sublation (*Aufhebung*) of previous moments in an ever richer and more inclusive momentary whole. This movement ends in the culminating moment of absolute spirit inclusive of all that came before it, an enriched return to the original moment of pure being. In Schelling this development took the form of a free movement of will from an initial moment of pure being or actuality to that act’s potential for development, indeed a threefold potentiality involving three potencies. They are a first potency for development through self-othering (the Father), a second potency which is the potentiality to become actual or real (the Son), and a third potency as the realization, in and through creation, of the actuality of the two first potencies in the renewed unity of being of the Father (the Spirit).

Solovyov’s move away from a Hegelian understanding of subject as a movement of conceptual thought to a more Schellingian approach permitted him to describe “subject” in terms of existence. Rather than taking up Hegel’s monosubjectively developing dialectical movement of subjectivity in and through a series of sequentially related moments, Solovyov embraced Schelling’s model of three modes of divine being interacting in the temporal realm to arrive at a renewed and enriched divine unity. He of course modified considerably what Schelling had said when he veered away from Schelling’s more radically developmental approach. In that approach modes of divine being became divine Persons through their interaction in the temporal realm as they worked to restore the original divine unity in a final and fuller form. For Solovyov, these three modes of divine being were, each in its own way, an inclusive whole from the beginning. Each was existent subject bringing about, again in its own way, the inclusive all-unity of God and humankind in what he called divine humanity. So Solovyov took up Schelling’s approach to working with three interacting modes of divine being and ran with it, so to speak. He did this as he worked out a rich description of the Father as will whose content is love as good, Son as intellect whose content is love as truth, and Spirit as feeling whose content is love as beauty. In the process, Solovyov stressed less the absolute freedom of God in the arising of each of these modes than did Schelling.

Solovyov did then indeed develop his trinitarian thought in the form of a concrete Idealism, in effect a trinitarian religious metaphysics. In a sort



of metaphysical shorthand, we can describe his concrete Idealism at least in the earlier Solovyov as, from the perspective of the existent self, a necessary movement from an initial actuality to potentiality to renewed and inclusive actuality. From the perspective of content, it was a necessary movement, again at least in the earlier Solovyov, from potentiality to ideal actuality to real actuality, with the last considered finally as being the unity of divine and human through free human participation in divine humanity. In this trinitarian religious metaphysics Solovyov worked in a manner similar to that of Schelling in Schelling's positive philosophy of revelation. That is to say, Solovyov interwove philosophy and theology while he proceeded in his reflections on the basis of reasoned argument. In these reflections and in his constructive work in general, Solovyov never seemed able fully to tear himself away from Hegel. He referred regularly to Hegel's terminology and overall emphasis on self and other and renewed, enriched self. He seemed ever ready to work, at least in a general way, with that terminology and emphasis. Still, with Schelling he stressed facticity and existence, which he insisted cannot be grasped by logic or reason as such. He affirmed the ideal existence, in the divine world, of a content, essence, or idea of each actually existing entity in the temporally conditioned or real world, which content was knowable by intellectual intuition. It was this stress upon the ideal existence of the essence of each entity in the divine world parallel to the actually existing entity itself in the temporal realm which made it possible for him to speak of inclusive wholeness. He spoke of this wholeness in regard both to the eternal realm of the trinitarian God and to the temporal world in as it is brought together with God in divine humanity. It was this doubled actualization, ideal and real, which permitted Solovyov to work out his understanding of God as developing without, at least in his own view, threatening the transcendence of God. Whereas Schelling seemed to stress so much potentiality in God, Solovyov spoke more positively of an ideal actualization in God so that God was, as triune God, already in an eternal way inclusive whole or all-one. God could then actualize in a temporal way that inclusive wholeness in relation to the world through free and divinely inspired human participation in divine unity.

While most of those who study the thought of Solovyov admire his brilliance and strength in constructive reflection, there are discernible two overall evaluations of what he has accomplished. On the one hand, there is the evaluation of those, represented by Zenkovsky, who speak highly of Solovyov's organic synthesis<sup>80</sup> while noting what they consider serious, unresolved inconsistencies in his integrating thought.<sup>81</sup> On the other hand,

there is the evaluation of those, represented by Frederick Copleston and von Balthasar,<sup>82</sup> who readily acknowledge Solovyov's working with a great variety of sources. But they then stress, in what we might call more generous fashion, Solovyov's own creative advance as he brings forth something new in and through his synthesis. It might be helpful to provide an example, in line with this second evaluation, of the way in which Solovyov made his own, but in a new way, something typical of post-Kantian German Idealist thought. He brought together, in one overall movement climaxing in his idea of divine humanity, notions such as those of Trinity, Incarnation, creation, history, divinization, Church, and Kingdom of God.<sup>83</sup> He did this by adopting, but as well strongly adapting, the move characteristic of post-Kantian German Idealists to favor subject over substance as fundamental notion on the basis of which they elaborated their philosophical insights. I myself would be closer to Copleston and von Balthasar than to Zenkovsky in my evaluation of Solovyov's efforts to rethink Trinity anew by working with the trinitarian thought of Hegel and Schelling in conjunction with Scripture, Orthodox tradition, and so many other philosophical and mystical thinkers.

Throughout these remarks concerning the ways in which others, but in particular Hegel and Schelling, have influenced Solovyov's thinking, and especially his trinitarian thought, I have often used the phrase "working with." Speaking in this way permitted us to recognize that Solovyov took much inspiration from the thought of Hegel and Schelling, and especially their trinitarian thought. At the same time, it allowed us to acknowledge that he referred to and drew upon the insights of other sources, whether they be those of Scripture, early Church Fathers, Medieval thinkers, mystical writers or other philosophers, and philosophical as well as literary traditions. He referred to and drew upon such insights while creatively modifying positions taken by Hegel and Schelling to bring these insights and modified positions together in harmony with the overall direction his own trinitarian thought was taking. In effect, in his own integrating trinitarian thought Solovyov retained many of the more formal and structural directions which Hegel and Schelling laid out in their own philosophical reflection and in their trinitarian thought in particular. Admittedly, Solovyov often did this in ways divergent from what they had done.<sup>84</sup> He went further in working with Hegel and Schelling in that he made his own many of their more specific insights, sometimes more or less the way Hegel and Schelling had presented them but often in significantly modified form. The end-result was his own unique way of thinking Trinity as a Schellingian reworking of Hegel's notion of the individual as inclusive universal and true infinite.

His concrete idealism is a clear testimonial concerning the impact of post-Kantian German Idealism on trinitarian thought. It has, in turn, come to influence greatly subsequent Russian thinking.



The work of Marheineke, Dorner, and Solovyov on Trinity would be unthinkable without reference to post-Kantian German Idealism, and to Hegel and Schelling in particular. Marheineke, Dorner, and Solovyov are three important nineteenth-century trinitarian thinkers who each in his own way in thought and word witnesses to and constitutes a testimonial concerning the influence of German Idealist trinitarian thought in philosophical and theological circles. In his constructive trinitarian reflection, Marheineke is an example of a first effort early on in the nineteenth century to work with the thought of Schelling and then with that of Hegel as he interweaves notions of being and thought. Interestingly, it seems quite probable that he himself in turn reinforced Hegel's own commitment to working with the notion of Trinity. Dorner is in a sense a man out of season, especially given the onslaught, during the second half of the nineteenth century, of historically oriented thinking often Neo-Kantian in its approach and epistemology. But he does lay the groundwork for a renewed theological interest in the possibility of working, in the twentieth century, with post-Kantian German Idealist trinitarian thought. As the Neo-Kantians were winning the day in Germany, Solovyov burst upon the Russian philosophical and theological scenes with his Idealist-inspired dynamic understanding of oneness and unity as inclusive of multiplicity, a notion richer and fuller than the earlier Neo-Platonic notion of oneness. With his enriched understanding of oneness Solovyov recognized and reinforced the overall Russian appreciation for a sense of inclusive wholeness. He creatively reworked German Idealist trinitarian thought and mediated it to generations of Russian philosophers and theologians coming after him.<sup>85</sup> But it took a couple decades into the twentieth century before Idealist-influenced trinitarian thinking would, in part through Dorner, return with a vengeance to the German theological scene.

PART 3

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GERMAN IDEALIST FAMILY RESEMBLANCES



## Introduction to Part 3

At the beginning of the twentieth century, liberal Protestant theology was to a great extent characterized by an interest in more historical approaches to theological reflection and shared a number of general Neo-Kantian presuppositions. It formed an intellectual landscape hardly conducive to nourishing creative trinitarian reflection in any fruitful way. But shortly after the First World War, Karl Barth burst upon this seemingly barren scene, a theologian who launched what many consider a true theological revolution. He proceeded as Hegel and Dorner had done, each in his own way, in the previous century. That is to say, he, though also in his own way, began his whole mature dogmatic theological enterprise with Trinity, strongly emphasizing the autonomy of theology vis-à-vis other intellectual endeavors. Barth is generally credited with inciting a renewed interest in Trinity, which interest then increasingly marked much of the rest of twentieth-century theological reflection, whether confessionally or more philosophically rooted. He and a good number of other twentieth-century trinitarian thinkers drew critically upon the resources of Idealist thought on Trinity, sometimes more overtly and at other times in a more discrete fashion. In so doing they, with their own creative insights into the ancient Christian notion of the triune God, have witnessed to the perduring Idealist trinitarian legacy.

In its twentieth-century realization, this legacy lies at a farther remove from the post-Kantian Idealists who wrote and lectured in more or less the first half of the nineteenth-century. So tracing that legacy and seeking out evidence for it involves a process of interpretation, perhaps as much art as science and more complex than was the identification of Idealist influence and its resultant impact in the nineteenth-century. This process requires paying attention to more general considerations as well as to factors related to the self or the one interpreting and to the other or that which is the subject of interpretation.

Among more general considerations, we need to take into account both the intrinsic importance of what Hegel and Schelling had to say about Trinity and the growing chronological distance between them and twentieth-century trinitarian thinkers. Our process of interpretation requires recognizing, at least in principle, the possibility of a certain lineage among trinitarian thinkers who will have influenced those following after them. We have as well to recognize that Idealist philosophers and those whom their thought has influenced have conditioned, irrevocably, the overall intellectual and cultural context within which especially, but not only, Western thought finds itself and in which thinking about Trinity in particular takes place. For example, it would be hard not to acknowledge the more general impact the Idealists have had on contemporary understandings of experience and of the relationship between self and other. This impact establishes a context that has surely affected and conditioned, at times overtly and at other times less consciously, those in the twentieth century who were thinking creatively about Trinity. This impact surely continues to be an important factor in such reflection now into the twenty-first century.

In this interpretative process, from the side of the self we who are doing the interpreting need a reasonably good acquaintance with and knowledge of what Hegel and Schelling actually said. This is so that we may be sensitive to themes, approaches, and directions characteristic of Idealist trinitarian thinking. Being sensitive in this way will permit us, with creative insight and careful judgment, to identify and point out the presence of such themes, approaches, and directions in the thought of philosophers, theologians, and others who follow after the German Idealists. We also want to profit from previous study of the influence of Idealism on various trinitarian thinkers. And we need to recognize, surely critically, consensus formed or forming around the Idealist trinitarian lineage in general as well as concerning particular forms of Idealist influence noted in the positions developed by specific trinitarian thinkers.

In order to carry out this process of interpretation permitting us to trace the Idealist trinitarian legacy continuing in the twentieth-century, we must of course focus directly on the other or others whose thought is to be interpreted. We will want to consider whether various trinitarian thinkers have themselves acknowledged a debt to Idealist thinking, or even whether they have rejected such thinking. Of utmost importance, there must be something recognizable in a given trinitarian thinker's way of approaching Trinity and the themes addressed in that approach which makes of those thinkers at least potential witnesses<sup>1</sup> to an ongoing Idealist trinitarian legacy.

There follows upon these more initial remarks about tracing the twentieth-century legacy of Idealist trinitarian thought a further step in this process of discovery and interpretation. That step is to work carefully with these here-proposed ideas and approaches concerning ways to recognize this legacy in order to identify it more concretely. We will so work especially by referring to several carefully chosen twentieth-century trinitarian thinkers who, in their understanding of Trinity, exemplify and thus give witness to this legacy. We will do well to start on German soil, where three major theologians, namely, Karl Barth, Karl Rahner, and Wolfhart Pannenberg, among many possible others, serve as such witnesses. They have themselves in turn influenced, often quite directly, trinitarian thinkers who followed after them, whether in Europe or North America. Focusing on selected aspects of the thought of these three theologians will help us recognize what we might well call “family resemblances” between their thought on Trinity and that of Hegel or Schelling, or both. Here family resemblances refers to likenesses similar to those noted in a multigenerational family portrait when we rather spontaneously notice and then focus on facial and other features passed on from one generation to another.<sup>2</sup>

These family resemblances are similarities of thought identifiable in a variety of ways and which can, when examined, often be traced to the influence of post-Kantian German Idealist thinking. At times we can note such influence and its resultant impact on the basis of explicit statements made by the trinitarian thinkers themselves. At other times, however, it will be necessary to single out important themes similarly focused on, thought patterns ordered in like fashion, and dynamics according to which, in comparable fashion, relationships between human and divine develop. In some cases, there is a rather clear and established consensus concerning a relationship of what we can describe as trinitarian thinkers’ creative dependence on Idealist approaches to the question of Trinity. In other cases, the link may be less evident. Establishing it will then depend on a certain more spontaneous insight into the influence and resultant impact of Idealist thought on a specific trinitarian thinker. Identifying Hegelian influences will be easier since more work has been done on Hegel’s direct and indirect influence on subsequent trinitarian thought. Tracing Schelling’s influence will be somewhat more challenging since there is much detailed research still to be done on ways in which, and paths through which, Schelling’s thought may have come to influence later trinitarian thinking. Occasionally it will be helpful to note specific ways in which one or the other trinitarian thinker rejected or, from his perspective, corrected a position taken by Hegel and/or



Schelling. But in the following remarks we will focus primarily on the more positive reception of Idealist thinking by our selected subsequent trinitarian thinkers and, through them, the impact that thinking has had on trinitarian thought in general.

Already now, in a sense by way of anticipation, we can say that German Idealist thinkers, especially Hegel and Schelling, have indeed left in their aftermath a cultural and intellectual context especially conducive to reflecting creatively on the notion of God as Trinity. They have provided many specific insights and novel approaches which trinitarian thinkers coming after them have often found helpful, whether as such or in modified form, as these thinkers worked to give more contemporary expression to the ancient understanding of God as Trinity. Among these there is, then, first of all Karl Barth.

## Karl Barth

### *A Self-Revealing Trinity*

Barth (1886–1968) served for several years in pastoral ministry, first as vicar and then pastor. During this time he came to realize that his training in liberal Protestant theology had not prepared him well for preaching what his congregation needed to hear. Furthermore, the First World War effectively destroyed liberal theology’s seemingly facile cultural optimism. Faced with this situation, he turned to Paul’s Letter to the Romans and discovered there a new approach requiring that he stress the transcendent otherness of God. He came to see that divine revelation must include, without any other rational or cultural grounding, the condition for its being recognized.<sup>1</sup> The 1919 edition, and especially the 1922 edition, of his publication, *The Epistle to the Romans*,<sup>2</sup> launched a theological revolution. “Dialectical theology” became a term used to describe Barth’s and his followers’ theological stance developing out of this study.<sup>3</sup> However, ten years or so after the appearance of the 1922 edition of *Romans*, in the preface to the first volume of his *Church Dogmatics*, namely, *The Doctrine of the Word of God*, part 1, *Prolegomena to Church Dogmatics*,<sup>4</sup> Barth repudiated any impression he might have given that he wished to root his theology in philosophical existentialism or anything other than the Word of God heard in the Church. He writes in the preface with great determination that, come what may, he will be faithful to his understanding of his theological calling. His resulting monumental, multivolume *Church Dogmatics*, five overall volumes divided effectively into fourteen volumes including Index, has profoundly marked the further development of theology, and especially trinitarian theology,

throughout the twentieth century. It remains an important point of reference now well into the twenty-first century.

As we turn to Barth we will want to note how he almost single-handedly, in the Protestant world and surely beyond, relaunched interest in the notion of God as triune. He began his definitive systematic theological reflection with Trinity, thus bringing Trinity to the fore in theology as Hegel had done in philosophy early on in the nineteenth century. As we shall see, Barth's trinitarian thought resembles in structure that of Hegel when Barth sees Trinity as a movement of divine subjectivity reformulated in terms of divine self-revelation.

### Barth on Trinity

With great passion Barth lays out his initial, more formal presentation of Trinity in volume 1 of his *Church Dogmatics*.<sup>5</sup> Wolfhart Pannenberg summarizes the outline of that presentation as follows:

In CD, I/1, §§ 8–9, he [Barth] moves on from the concept of revelation to the doctrine of the Trinity, in §§ 10–12 he moves back from the revelatory work of the Father, Son, and Spirit to their eternal deity, then in §§ 13–15 (CD, I/2) he deals with the objective revelation of the triune God in the incarnation of the Son, and finally in §§ 16–18 he concludes with the subjective revelation of the triune God through the Holy Spirit.<sup>6</sup>

For a fuller view of Barth's thought on Trinity we would need to complement and enrich Barth's more monosubjectively formulated opening understanding of Trinity in volume 1, especially part 1. Doing this would require longer reference to his further discussions, in the subsequent volumes of his *Church Dogmatics*, of various aspects of Trinity which he considers there in the context of his prolonged reflections on reconciliation and redemption.<sup>7</sup> For present purposes, however, we will accept that, despite considerable discussion, there is a basic continuity<sup>8</sup> along with development between what Barth says in volume 1, part 1, about Trinity and his further reflections in subsequent volumes. In these volumes he seems in his more concrete discussions to give greater stress to distinctions and relations among the three modes of being in and through which, as Barth will say of course already in volume 1, "God reveals Godself as Lord."

This basic continuity will permit us, for present purposes, to get a fair taste of Barth's trinitarian theology by focusing on what Barth says in §§ 8–9, *Church Dogmatics*, 1/1. We would need on another occasion to refer to texts found later on in *Church Dogmatics* in order to get a better sense of the way in which he has further enriched his trinitarian thought, especially in volumes 2 and 4.<sup>9</sup> With regard to Barth's trinitarian thought in the later volumes, we can by way of anticipation mention what we will note later on in chapter 8 below. That is, it has been said that the stress Pannenberg places on the distinctions and relationships among the three divine Persons would be inconceivable without Barth's increased emphasis in volume 4 on the distinct ways in which God acts in God's self-revelation.<sup>10</sup>

Many great thinkers condense the essence of their thought into several paragraphs or pages here and there in their longer writings. Barth has surely done this in volume 1, part 1, of his *Church Dogmatics* and, more specifically, in chapter 2 entitled "The Revelation of God, Part I: The Triune God," §§ 8 and 9. So, as just mentioned, we will focus on these texts in which we can identify places where he spells out in concentrated fashion his trinitarian theology after a longer preliminary reflection in chapter 1 on "The Word of God as the Criterion of Dogmatics."

Barth opens § 8, entitled "God in His Revelation" (295–347), with the following summary statement indicating where he will go with his argument in the three sections of this article as he lays out his initial presentation of Trinity: "God's Word is God Himself in His revelation. For God reveals Himself as the Lord and according to Scripture this signifies for the concept of revelation that God Himself in unimpaired unity yet also in unimpaired distinction is Revealer, Revelation, and Revealedness" (295).<sup>11</sup>

In the first of this article's three sections, "The Place of the Doctrine of the Trinity in Dogmatics" (295–304), Barth begins with reference to revelation, and to Scripture as witness of revelation, as unique and not to be put alongside other possible revelations. Scripture testifies to the revelation of God as Yahweh in the Old Testament and as Θεός or κύριος in the New Testament. For Barth, then, the triple question, which in the following phrase is expressed in condensed form, arises immediately: Who is this God, how does the revelation occur, and what is the result of the revelation? In his famous phrase, Barth answers, "*God* reveals Himself. He reveals Himself *through Himself*. He reveals *Himself*." So God is identical with God's act of revealing Godself and with that revealing's effect. Already here Barth sees that we must "begin the doctrine of revelation with the doctrine of the triune God" (296). God is the self-revealing God whose revelation is received

by people. Barth continues to work with these three questions which he intriguingly intertwines in a perichoretic interaction, though Barth does not quite use this word perichoretic in regard to them. The first question, who is God, cannot be answered fully without reference to God's self-revealing and without further reference to what makes possible the reception of this revealing by those addressed in the act of revelation. And the second and third questions cannot be handled without referring to the first question as well as to each other. With reference again to the Scriptural witness, he concludes, "Thus to the same God who in unimpaired unity is the Revealer, the revelation and the revealedness, there is also ascribed in unimpaired differentiation within Himself this threefold mode of being" (299). Beginning, then, from the primordial reference to divine self-revelation, Barth puts the concrete doctrine of the Trinity at the beginning of his *Church Dogmatics*, and says that it conditions not just in an external fashion but from within, so to speak, all further theological reflection (303).

Barth further unpacks his understanding of the relationship among revelation, scripture, and the doctrine of the Trinity in the second of these three sections of article § 8, "The Root of the Doctrine of the Trinity" (304–33). At the end of this longer section and the beginning of the following section he makes a rather succinct and helpful summary (332–34) of what he has said over the course of this section. We will paraphrase at some length this summary, and supplement it with further points he makes earlier on in the section.

At the end of the second section Barth affirms straightforwardly that he has been looking at the root of the doctrine of the Trinity in the concrete revelation witnessed to in the Bible. He says, to pick up his colorful expression, revelation is the ground or soil out of which the doctrine of the Trinity has grown. Throughout this second section Barth has repeatedly affirmed that the basic statement, "God reveals Himself as the Lord," has "a threefold meaning and yet a simple content" in the biblical texts and their witness. He found there "the three elements of unveiling, veiling and impartation, or form, freedom and historicity, or Easter, Good Friday and Pentecost, or Son, Father and Spirit." He sees in these statements and this reading of them that he has said "the same thing three times in three indissolubly different ways," and has rightly concluded "that revelation must indeed be understood as the root or ground of the doctrine of the Trinity" (332).

Barth more modestly asserts he has found "that the biblical doctrine of revelation is implicitly, and in some passages explicitly, a pointer to the doctrine of the Trinity" (333). So doctrine is not some externally imposed

or arbitrarily developed position. Rather, it is Church exegesis in which it is necessary ever to refer back to the biblical texts. The doctrine of the Trinity stands, and here we are saying it perhaps slightly more bluntly than Barth does, as an answer in relation to the question of revelation as witnessed to by Scripture.

Barth opens the third of these three sections in § 8 succinctly: "In trying to analyse the biblical concept of revelation, we have arrived at the thesis that this analysis reduced to its simplest form, the threefold yet single lordship of God as Father, Son and Spirit, is the root of the doctrine of the Trinity" (334). Before proceeding on to the third section of § 8, however, it will be helpful to supplement our paraphrasing of and citing from Barth's own summary of the second section with several points he makes, during the course of that section, concerning divine lordship.

Barth insists that he is not working with anything other than the concrete revelation witnessed to in and through Scripture. Revelation is God speaking as I to a Thou, "*Dei loquentis persona*" (304). God is the very speaking itself, so divine revelation is self-revelation in the strictest sense of this term. Barth summarizes all of this "in the statement that God reveals Himself as the Lord" (306). He reads the biblical phrase "kingdom of God" as God's lordship, thus in effect identifying God's being with God's action and God's rule. In this action and rule God is the ground without ground (307). In phrases which foresee his further reflection on God's lordship, Barth writes, again with a threefold rhythm of expression: "To be Lord means being what God is in His revelation to man. To act as Lord means to act as God in His revelation acts on man. To acquire a Lord is to acquire what man does in God when he receives His revelation" (306). Barth identifies divine lordship with divine freedom and then spells out how this freedom is exercised as Father, Son, and Spirit, to use traditional dogmatic terminology.

In his consideration of divine lordship, Barth confirms that the doctrine of the Trinity is an analysis of revelation as witnessed to in Scripture, "the interpretation of revelation" (312). It is using other words to say what has been said of revelation in Scripture. Of particular importance, he says that "the question of revealer, revelation and being revealed corresponds to the logical and material order both of biblical revelation and also of the doctrine of the Trinity" (314). He then develops at length various aspects of God's lordship as freedom, with special emphasis on the Christological moment, namely, the fact that God's freedom is specifically manifested, and consequently his lordship as well, in his self-revelation in what he is not,

namely, a human being. "This Sonship is God's lordship in His revelation" (320). God exercises lordship as well in revealing Godself, in unveiling Godself as not being unvealable. The hidden God is the revealed God as hidden God (321). In revealing himself, God the Father reveals himself in the very fact that he does not take form as the Son. So "God's fatherhood, too, is God's lordship in His revelation" (324). And, third, God's self-unveiling is an impartation to humans by God who cannot be unveiled. Here Barth argues against any form of historical understanding of divine self-revelation which would be subject to scientific, cultural, or other reasoned norms. He wishes even in the reception of divine self-revelation to assert and protect divine transcendence, yet the impartation of divine revelation occurs to certain people in very definite situations (326). Here Barth is speaking of God who "reveals Himself as the Spirit, not as any spirit, not as the basis of man's spiritual life which we can discover and awaken, but as the Spirit of the Father and the Son." In reference to John 4:24, he says that God's being spirit "is also God's lordship in His revelation" (332). In his grammatical analysis of revelation according to trinitarian categories, Barth moves from revelation as witnessed to by Scripture to the affirmation of God's lordship understood as freedom on to the exercise of that freedom in self-revelation as the structured movement from hidden Father, revealer, to the Son who has taken the form of not-God, revelation, to the Spirit who is the revealedness of God in humans.

In the third and last of these sections of § 8, entitled "*Vestigium Trinitatis*" (333–47). Barth reiterates the single rootage of the doctrine of the Trinity in revelation witnessed to in Scripture.<sup>12</sup> He rejects the more traditional usage of the expression "vestiges of the Trinity," which refers to creaturely realities not taken up into and used by God in God's divine self-revelation. He might accept considering the unveiling of God as the Son or Word as a vestige, but he wants at all costs to protect divine transcendence by resisting the possible identification of any other root of the Trinity or knowledge of it in creation as such. He shows a certain respect for ancient searches for such vestiges, recognizing that persons with good intentions noticed a certain aptness for various things and expressions to be appropriated as ways of speaking of the Trinity known through revelation (340). But the true vestiges of the Trinity are the forms "which God Himself in His revelation has assumed in our language, world, and humanity" (347). Barth accepts only one root, and not two, of the doctrine of the Trinity.

Barth treats directly of the immanent Trinity in § 9, "The Triunity of God." He opens with the following initial summary: "The God who reveals

Himself according to Scripture is One in three distinctive modes of being subsisting in their mutual relations: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is thus that He is the Lord, i.e., the Thou who meets man's I and unites Himself to this I as the indissoluble Subject and thereby and therein reveals Himself to him as his God" (348). After this opening statement, Barth sketches out his thought on immanent Trinity in four sections. In the first section, entitled "Unity in Trinity" (348–53), he briefly reviews the history of trinitarian thought in the Church, with a focus on unity or, better, the oneness of God as subject of revelation.<sup>13</sup> God is one in such a way that the triunity of God is "the basis of the Christian concept of the unity [oneness] of God" (348). In his effort to refute all possibilities of tritheism, Barth identifies the essence or being of God with God's lordship. Given his previous remarks on divine lordship, he can now speak of the name of Father, Son, and Spirit as indicating God is one in threefold repetition, which repetition in turn is grounded in His Godhead. Continuing to stay close to Barth's own wording, we can say God is God only in this repetition and "is the one God in each repetition" (350). For the moment Barth is using the word "repetition" to refer to the three divine persons as he rejects vehemently all notions of three individuals in God or of threeness of divine essence. For him the traditional use of divine persons does not refer to three personalities. There are not three divine I's of which we speak but "thrice of the one divine I" (351). He ends this first section by stressing that revelation means God's presence. And if this is the case, Christ and Spirit cannot be subordinate hypostases. "In the predicate and object of the concept revelation we must again have, and to no less a degree, the subject itself. Revelation and revealing must be equal to the revealer" (353). The oneness of God requires that Father, Son, and Spirit, respectively Revealer, Revelation, and Revealedness be equal. Otherwise the oneness of God would be identified only with Revealer, and Revelation and Revealedness would be impossible.

In bringing this review of the first section of § 9 to a close, we will do well to cite George Hunsinger's listing of three different senses in which God is one for Barth: personal, ontological, and dominical.<sup>14</sup> At first reading in Barth, these three senses do not seem evident though they can be found there at further reading. Hunsinger identifies personal divine oneness as the Scriptural insistence, according to Barth, on God as indissolubly Subject and divine Thou (348). He refers to ontological divine oneness when he recalls that Barth speaks of divine personality as belonging, to cite Barth, "to the one unique essence of God which the doctrine of the Trinity does not seek to triple but rather to recognize in its simplicity" (350). By dominical divine



oneness Hunsinger means Barth's reference to divine lordship. Hunsinger writes that God's "essence is identical with his sovereignty and freedom."<sup>15</sup> He closes his remarks on this section of § 9 with the reminder that for Barth "the eternal God's personal, ontological, and dominical oneness subsist in and through (and only in and through) his eternal threeness, never above it or behind it."<sup>16</sup>

With the second of these four sections in § 9, bearing the sectional title "Trinity in Unity" (353–68), Barth turns more directly to the question of the threeness in God. More specifically, he raises the most difficult trinitarian question of the notion of the three, which are distinct in God, as persons. He rejects the idea that the oneness of God might indicate an understanding of one as indicating a simple singularity or some form of isolation. He then turns to the notion of person and affirms we use it simply because we have no better term with which to refer to the three who are irrevocably distinct in God and in whom God is one. Barth provides succinct and admirably clear analyses of various efforts throughout the history of Christian theology to come to terms with one or the other meaning of person as used in relation to the Trinity. He struggles with these various interpretations and notes approvingly Thomas Aquinas's effort to understand the divine Persons in relational terms. However, he argues that his preferred term, "modes of being" (*Seinsweise*), serves him best in his effort to express the distinct threeness of the triune God in an era when person or personality has come to mean someone with an independent self-consciousness and will.<sup>17</sup> Without, then, in any way embracing modalism since the distinctions will be affirmed not only in regard to the economic Trinity but as subsisting in the immanent Trinity itself, he summarizes his insight as follows:

The statement that God is One in three ways of being, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, means, therefore, that the one God, i.e., the one Lord, the one personal God, is what He is not just in one mode but—we appeal in support simply to the result of our analysis of the biblical concept of revelation—in the mode of the Father, in the mode of the Son, and in the mode of the Holy Ghost. (359)

At this point Barth acknowledges he cannot say too much about that which distinguishes each of the three divine modes of being in their subsistent distinctness. To say more, he will turn shortly to a consideration of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit first of all for each

one in revelation as witnessed to in Scripture and, consequent thereupon, then primordially and by way of archetypal realization in the immanent Trinity (for example, 362, 366). For now, Barth insists that God “is God three times in different ways, so different that it is only in this threefold difference that He is God, so different that this difference, this being in these here modes of being, is absolutely essential to Him, so different, then, that this difference is irremovable” (360). The divine distinctions derive from their differing relationships to one another as indicated in revelation. For the present, Barth remains content with indicating the more formal relations among Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as, respectively, Revealer, Revelation, and Revealedness or Being Revealed. He brings these three notions together with the general scriptural reference to begetter, begotten, and one arising from begetter and begotten. Revealer and Revelation are distinct in that the latter brings about something new. The third, Revealedness, is a result, namely, the “purpose of the revealer and . . . the goal of the revelation” (363). According to the Scriptural witness, for Barth God “possesses Himself as Father, i.e., pure Giver, as Son, i.e., Receiver and Giver, and as Spirit, i.e., pure Receiver” (364). With subsistent, related divine modes of being Barth feels he has provided a relatively better understanding than does person (367). Yet, when all is said and done, for Barth, “the *mysterium trinitatis* remains a mystery” (368). To bring his thought on the oneness and threeness of the triune God together, he takes up the notions of dialectic, *perichōrēsis*, and appropriation.<sup>18</sup> He does this in the third section of § 9, entitled “Trinity” (*Dreieinigkeit*) (368–75), before he brings § 9 to a close with a final, fourth section, entitled “The Meaning of the Doctrine of the Trinity” (375–83). Given our overall interest in Idealism’s influence and impact on trinitarian thinking, we can review these two sections more briefly.

In the third section, Barth faces the difficulties many find in thinking through the notion of Trinity and states, straightforwardly, that thinking the oneness in three and the threeness in one must be done dialectically. This is about all we can do, given the mystery of the Trinity. In the immanent Trinity, the threeness in one occurs as what has classically been called *perichōrēsis*. He speaks of difference and fellowship among the divine modes of being, which modes are identical with the relations of origin. He then moves to consider the unity of the Father, Son, and Spirit *ad extra*. While distinguishing divine essence as such and God’s work, Barth says that God’s essence is his work as freely grounded in his essence. While God remains ultimately incomprehensible, there is no reason why God’s work should not be able to draw our attention to the incomprehensible distinctions

in Godself. He speaks of an analogy "between the terms Father, Son, and Spirit along with other formulations of this triad in revelation on the one side, and on the other side the three divine modes of being which consist in the different relations of origin and in which we have come to know the truly incomprehensible eternal distinctions in God" (372). This is an analogy which respects and allows the ultimate incomprehensibility of God to remain. Barth makes an appeal to the notion of appropriation to help explain that the interrelationships among the divine modes of being in the immanent Trinity correspond to the involution and convolution, as he says, in God's work. In all God's work, it is God, who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who works. In this effort to understand God's work, Barth says we can proceed by appropriation, a process in which an act or attribute is given to one particular divine mode of being, though it is God in all his modes of being who acts. Barth brings the notions of *perichōrēsis* and appropriation together by saying they are dialectically interrelated (375).

In the fourth and final section of § 9 concerning the meaning of the doctrine of the Trinity, Barth provides a wonderful overview of his presentation of the doctrine of the Trinity as the grammar of revelation as it is witnessed to in Scripture. He reminds us that for him the doctrine of the Trinity is a Church dogma spoken in a time and using words different from those of the earliest Church, during whose time the Scriptures were written or at least increasingly recognized as Scripture. The doctrine of the Trinity tells us who is the subject of revelation, namely, God. The self-revealing of God in being and speech and action is "the moments of His self-veiling or self-unveiling or self-impartment to men." The Bible does not say that "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are equal in essence . . . nor does it say that God is only in this way . . . [these points] are the twofold content of the Church doctrine of the Trinity" (380–81). With this doctrine the Church rejects subordinationism, which would make of God a subject like us. The Church equally rejects modalism, which would imply that the divine distinctions are not real. There is nothing behind the three divine modes of being.

Barth goes on in § 10 to discuss in greater detail God as Father. He speaks first of God as creator, and then as eternal Father. In § 11 he speaks of God the Son, first referring to God as reconciler and then as the eternal Son. In § 12 he presents God the Holy Spirit, first under the rubric "God as Redeemer" and then as the eternal Spirit. In each of these, Barth moves from Revealer, Revelation, and Revealedness as seen in divine revelation, the economic Trinity, to the archetypal understanding of God as these three in the immanent Trinity, constituting it.

## Idealist Family Resemblances

As we now look back over this admittedly partial but hopefully not unfair presentation of Karl Barth's brilliant work on Trinity, we would perhaps be justifiably tempted to say that Barth relaunched twentieth-century interest in Trinity with some Idealist help. We begin to recognize a more direct and, as well, a more indirect or mediated influence and consequent impact of Idealist thought on Barth's interpretation of revelation in trinitarian terms. To help us identify this influence, we can do no better than turn first of all to an important article by Wolfhart Pannenberg, "Die Subjektivität Gottes und die Trinitätslehre: Ein Beitrag zur Beziehung zwischen Karl Barth und der Philosophie Hegels."<sup>19</sup> Pannenberg brings to the fore several elements of Hegelian thought which he sees as reflecting various parallels between the thought of Barth and that of Hegel. As we shall note later on, in this article he draws attention to such parallels at least in part as a way of critiquing both Hegel and Barth. In helping understand Barth better, Pannenberg seems also to have created a space for his own trinitarian reflection.

Pannenberg opens his discussion on the relationship between Barth and Hegel with the acknowledgment that there is a growing consensus that Barth's theology is a variation on modern themes of subjectivity and autonomy.<sup>20</sup> After a review of various aspects of the development of Barth's thought in the 1920s, Pannenberg draws attention to several content-wise parallels between Barth and Hegel in that thought from 1927 on, and especially from 1932 on. For instance, as Barth himself had mentioned, Hegel had almost single-handedly reintroduced the notion of the Trinity into philosophical and at least Protestant theological discussion. In his own passionate and inimitable way, Barth did this again for theology in the twentieth century. Indeed, Barth found in Trinity, and here especially immanent Trinity, a way to begin his theological reflection. But, in reaction to Hegel, he assured the independence of God who, as Father, stands in relation to the Son and not then in a necessary relation with the world as a condition for divine self-development. In both Hegel and Barth the notions of revelation and Trinity are closely linked, and are ultimately the same movement. Hegel speaks of the movement as one of divine self-development and Barth focuses more on the movement as one of divine self-revelation, though of course Hegel had spoken of both.<sup>21</sup> Hegel and Barth both worked with and gave great emphasis to Anselm's ontological proof for the existence of God.<sup>22</sup> Despite these more material resemblances, Barth never ceased to recall the ambiguities tied to Hegel's thought as, for Barth, ultimately finitizing Hegel's

supposed infinite movement of thought when Hegel tied it necessarily with finite human subjectivity, out of which it never escapes. Barth seems to have found in his encounter with Kierkegaard's thought confirmation of his basic hesitancy before that of Hegel.<sup>23</sup>

Pannenberg then refers to Dorner, whom he sees as falling under the influence of Hegel but does not specifically mention Schelling. As Pannenberg brings out, Barth greatly appreciated Dorner especially for his insistence on the importance of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity and the way in which it permitted him to move beyond both Pietism and Rationalism.<sup>24</sup> Also, Dorner insisted that human personality had its grounding in the Trinity, a theme dear to Barth. Pannenberg reminds us that Dorner had already spoken of divine modes of being, which phrasing Barth took over as his own. But surely we have in Dorner a theologian serving as mediator between not only Hegel's thought but also that of the later Schelling, on the one hand, and that of Barth and those subsequently influenced by him, on the other. Idealist thought influenced Barth both more directly through his reading especially of Hegel and more indirectly through Dorner.

Following Pannenberg again, we see that he notes difficulties with the idea of establishing the divine I as already realized with God the Father. Among these difficulties, he points to the almost inevitable subordination of Son and Spirit when one begins in such a way. This was for Pannenberg a problem Dorner, but not Barth, had resolved by establishing the divine I as absolute personality resulting from the interaction of the three divine modes of being.<sup>25</sup> As we have seen, for Barth the divine I of absolute personality expresses itself from the beginning in and as each of the three divine modes of being.

Among the further points Pannenberg makes in this dense, insightful article, we could mention his claim that Barth in fact does not so much work out his trinitarian thought on the basis of Scriptural exegesis but more on the basis of an analysis of the inner logic of the concept of revelation.<sup>26</sup> As we will recall, Barth would of course respond that his very notion of revelation was, for him at least, witnessed to in Scripture. Pannenberg goes on to refer to Barth's saying that God already in eternity is not without his other and is Godself insofar as he is with and in that other. Pannenberg then insightfully asks the rather astute question as to whether this is not at least in its structure the very understanding of subjectivity which Hegel worked out in the development of his understanding of Trinity out of the concept of the Spirit. Pannenberg goes on further to ask if even the form

of this argument is not similar to that of Hegel. For, while we need to recognize real differences, both Hegel and Barth had, each in his own way, worked out the notion and structured movement of Trinity from and as one of divine self-revelation.<sup>27</sup>

With this remark by Pannenberg we have come to the essence, so to speak, of the resemblance between the thought of Barth and that especially but not only of Hegel. The structured movement of Barth's thought on Trinity as a movement of subject, predicate, and object or Revealer, Revelation, and Revealedness parallels that of Hegel with his notions of "in itself," "for itself," and "in and for itself." This is, according to Pannenberg, for both Hegel and Barth a self-objectivizing movement as divine self-revelation, though Hegel articulates this movement in a more radical formulation including creation as moment of divine self-revelation whereas for Barth that self-revelation occurs in Jesus Christ.<sup>28</sup> We can complement what Pannenberg says by adding that, while for Hegel Trinity is a movement of spirit formulated in various ways appropriate to the various moments in his encyclopedic system, for Barth Trinity is a triply exercised movement of divine lordship. Spirit is, as we will recall, for Hegel an ultimately necessary movement of thought. Lordship for Barth is the free acting of the one divine personality in the three distinct divine modes of being. The movement Barth proposes then reflects the structure of that of Hegel. But the way in which he sees it developing reflects more the thought of Schelling as mediated through Dörner. For once Dörner and Barth have veered away from Hegel's project of identifying God as a movement of conceptual thought in and through human thinking, there is a next, natural step. Within the overall Idealist framework constituting at least a partial context for Barth's thought that next step is to think more, as Schelling did, in terms of will and decision. And this is precisely what Barth does at least indirectly to the extent that he identifies the essence or being of God with the acts of God within the Trinity and in further revelation through creation, reconciliation, and redemption.

Other authors have indicated additional resemblances in Barth's trinitarian thought to aspects of the thought of Idealist thinkers, resemblances we could not always address more directly, given our focus on part 1 of the first volume of Barth's *Church Dogmatics*. By way of example we might cite Samuel M. Powell, who draws attention to what he calls resonances between Barth's thought and that of Hegel. He speaks of the "centrality and Christocentric character of revelation in Barth's theology,"<sup>29</sup> which resembles Hegel's view of revelation. He also speaks of Barth's presentation of "the

dialectical relationship between Father and Son" in volume 4 of the *Church Dogmatics*. In this relationship God passes over into the negation of God without ceasing to be God. Then too, Eberhard Jüngel<sup>30</sup> has, with regard to Barth's trinitarian thought, written that God's being is in becoming, a theme Hegel himself had in a systematic and determined way introduced into philosophical and theological reflection on God.<sup>31</sup>

Barth has, then, followed in the footsteps of Hegel. He has, like Hegel, thought Trinity without having, at least in principle, to identify a divine essence beyond or underlying what is for Hegel the moments constituting the movement of divine subjectivity or for Barth the modes in and through which absolute divine personality expresses itself. This one movement, whether in Hegel or Barth, permitted each of them to bring together and identify a number of theologoumena. Among them we can name trinitarian divine subjectivity or personality, divine self-revelation, and the kingdom of God. With respect to the kingdom of God, each of these thinkers identified it with what can be termed more loosely the being itself of God. In this Hegel set up and Barth reinforced a pattern and an approach toward understanding the kingdom or reign and realm of God serving as an alternative to the more ethically oriented Kantian understanding of the kingdom of God. These two alternatives, with the former more easily incorporating the latter, have conditioned and established the general parameters of further twentieth-century philosophical and theological reflection on the notion of the kingdom of God.

In evaluating the greatness of Hegel's philosophy, Barth had written, "It is possible to bypass Fichte and Schelling, but it is as impossible to pass by Hegel as it is to pass by Kant."<sup>32</sup> Yet at least in regard to trinitarian thinking, Barth himself seems in his emphasis on divine freedom and divine modes of being to remind us as well of the continuing influence of the later Schelling on trinitarian thinking. In Barth we recognize at least the indirect influence of Schelling through that of Dorner. Indeed we notice family resemblances between Barth and several of his Idealist predecessors, and especially Hegel.<sup>33</sup> In one way or another, through Barth those predecessors have continued to influence subsequent trinitarian thinking. We can do well to recall again Barth's evaluation of Hegel as "a great problem and a great disappointment, but perhaps also a great promise."<sup>34</sup> We may indeed see Barth, with all his strengths and weakness, as fulfilling his own prophecy. In the various family resemblances Barth's trinitarian thought shares with that of Hegel and Schelling; Barth in his own creative way shows something of the great promise of Hegel and indeed, even to some extent, Schelling.<sup>35</sup>

## Karl Rahner

### *A Self-Communicating Trinity*

Rahner (1904–1984) is arguably the most influential Catholic theologian of the twentieth century.<sup>1</sup> He is a complex thinker, a theologian who has worked with and incorporated elements from several philosophical traditions and approaches into his thinking as he addressed a wide-ranging series of theological questions. Among these traditions and approaches we could point, among others, to those of Thomas Aquinas, Neo- and transcendental Thomists, Heidegger, and of course German Idealists, with the influence of the Idealists mediated to a certain extent through Heidegger.<sup>2</sup> Complex as Rahner's thought may be and much as Rahner brought philosophy into his theological reflection, it is important not to lose sight of the basic fact that, like Barth, he was working out of a deep pastoral concern rooted in his early experience. During the war-torn period from 1939 to 1945 he served variously as university lecturer in Vienna, colleague at the Vienna Pastoral Institute, and pastoral worker in Lower Bavaria. And, as a Jesuit he was familiar with Ignatian spirituality, which is generally said to form a background to and point of regular, but usually more implicit, reference for much of his theological reflection in general. Here, we could add, for his thought on Trinity and the experience of God in particular.<sup>3</sup> Regarding his trinitarian thought we should already now note that Rahner, in a way structurally similar to what Barth had done, develops his understanding of Trinity as a movement of divine self-communication which resembles in structure and dynamic that of Hegel who spoke of divine self-development.



## Rahner on Trinity

In line with our present concern for the influence and resultant impact of Idealist thought on twentieth-century trinitarian thinking, it will be helpful to approach Rahner's complex thought by examining three aspects of it. They are, first and very briefly, his emphasis on uncreated grace; second, his understanding of the Christian experience of God as he structured his presentation of it in line with his transcendental theological anthropology; and, third, his trinitarian thought itself. As we will see, Rahner shows considerable formal similarity in approach and in the dynamic movement of his thought with Hegel in particular. At the same time he rather explicitly attempts to make what he will consider essential theological correctives to aspects of Idealist thought.

It is his sensitivity to and emphasis on the Christian reality of the experience of God which, I would suggest, led Rahner in his early years as a theologian to veer away from the then more current, especially Thomist and neo-Thomist, emphasis on created grace. Created grace was the effect resulting from divine action within the human person. Its understanding was linked more especially with the notion of efficient causality. God worked as one efficient cause not only in creation but also in salvation, with a resulting effect identified in persons as a change in them and in their ontological status. Created grace was in effect an elevation of the created person to be able to function at a supernatural level. But such emphasis on created grace, with its concomitant and presupposed divine activity understood in terms of efficient causality, did not seem to account sufficiently for the richness of Christian experience of God and, Rahner would even come to say, of human experience of God as such. In his alternative approach, he proposed to focus on the notion of uncreated grace, that is, on another way in which we can speak of God exercising causality in the relationship between divine and human. He referred to this alternative form of divine causality as one of quasi-formal causality. He later spoke more simply of formal causality, namely, the varied presence of Godself in our lives. This was God present to us, God as uncreated grace.<sup>4</sup>

Following upon our noting Rahner's emphasis on uncreated grace as the presence of God in and to us, we can now turn more explicitly and quite naturally, so to speak, to Rahner's understanding of the Christian experience of God. We can access pertinent aspects of his creative insight into the structure of that experience by taking a look at selected elements in his transcendental theological anthropology. This review of such elements

will then more easily open onto a summary of his trinitarian thought, the systematic presentation of which presupposes, and yet as well leads to, his theological anthropology.

By now the major lines of Rahner's transcendental theological anthropology and thus of his analysis of experience of God are well-known.<sup>5</sup> Rahner argues that an analysis of the transcendental character of the human self should always consider the fact that the human self is a historically conditioned unitary reality. But what is more immediately relevant for us is the fact that he distinguishes and relates two sides, aspects, or levels to that self and so to the human experience of God (*Gotteserfahrung*). Rahner sees a more everyday side to human experience where the self functions in what he calls a thematic or reflexively conscious way. He calls this level categorial. It is here that humans experience reality in terms of a subject/object structure and that they talk of such experiences. But he also identifies what he calls a pre-thematic or non-reflexive aspect or level of human experience prior to and more fundamental than the more discursive, categorial level. He speaks of the pre-thematic aspect or level as transcendental. Often using and in so doing transforming Kantian terminology, he works with this transcendental aspect of experience to ground and explicate his various theological positions on a variety of questions such as revelation, grace, and especially the experience of God.<sup>6</sup> For him, on this transcendental level we are pre-reflexively aware of the prior, freely given mystery of God intimately present in and to every human self open to the infinite in what he calls that self's transcendental. Here he can speak of an experience of God without reducing God to a mere object among other objects. God is present to the human self as subject to subject and as the infinite and mysterious loving horizon of human transcendental.

For Rahner the human self is a whole and a united reality. This divine presence as freely given loving and forgiving horizon and the free reception or rejection of it by the human self come to expression to varying degrees in and through the categorial level, or perhaps we could also say side, to human experience and communal history. The human experience of God occurs most properly on the transcendental level. Yet it is expressed or mediated in and through the reflexive consciousness and everyday historical activity of the self and of the various human communities.<sup>7</sup> This *a priori*, pre-reflexive transcendental experience of God assures that no true divine revelation or prophetic announcement "from without" and on the level of categorial experience functions in a merely extrinsic fashion in relation to the free, experiencing human self. For what comes from without as true

divine revelation and self-gift, historically conditioned, reverberates with what has already taken place in the intimacy of the transcendental experience of divine gift and human freedom. The human self freely discovers and recognizes what has already occurred in the depths of its own heart.<sup>8</sup>

Rahner goes on to mention various totalizing and integrating experiences such as those of joy and of being loved or of loving. But what is of particular present interest is his analysis of certain aspects of the structure and dynamic of the experience of God as such. Of special interest are the ways in which for him the mediation of the human experience of God takes place. In his insistence that God is experienced directly through the mediation of concrete finite realities, Rahner does acknowledge the role of such mediation.<sup>9</sup> But he recasts the discussion somewhat when he thinks of such words and deeds themselves as expressions and objectifications of what has already taken place at the transcendental level.<sup>10</sup> His focus is on words and deeds in their function as expressions of what has already occurred within the depths of the human self. For Rahner, such words and deeds are expressions both of the divine other as loving and freely self-communicating mystery within the depths of the human self and of the free human response to that self-communication (*Selbstmitteilung*).

As we move now from his embrace of a transcendental/categorical structure to the experience of God on to a consideration of selected aspects of his understanding of Trinity, we will find that Rahner in this understanding stresses more clearly the need for a double mediation. He speaks of the presence of the Spirit at the transcendental level and the presence of the historical savior, Jesus Christ, at the categorical level. In the context of this trinitarian discussion, he will insist on the absolute necessity for the doubled form of this mediation, to which he will refer as the doubled form of divine self-communication.<sup>11</sup> His thought in this regard becomes quite complex and seems to vary somewhat, at least in emphasis, from one writing to another. At this point, we need simply note that, outside his more explicitly trinitarian writings, he seems to continue to give a certain priority and emphasis to the transcendental as compared with his reference to the categorical.<sup>12</sup>

Our brief review of the emphasis Rahner places on uncreated grace and his analysis of the Christian experience of God lead into a consideration of selected aspects of his trinitarian thought. Referring to his analysis of the Christian experience of God before considering his more explicit trinitarian thought has allowed us to bring to the fore elements of his thought which tend to fade into the background as Rahner works out his more formal

presentation of Trinity as an analysis of divine self-communication and self-gift. We will now focus on Rahner's presentation of his trinitarian thought in his study, *Trinity*, whose title in its German original reads, significantly, "Der dreifaltige Gott als transzendenter Urgrund der Heilsgeschichte" ("The Trinity as Transcendent Ground of Salvation History"). Of special interest will be his remarks in the third section, "A Systematic Outline of Trinitarian Theology."<sup>13</sup> We will complement this review with further points drawn from his two articles, "Trinity, Divine," and "Trinity in Theology," in the six-volume theological encyclopedia, *Sacramentum Mundi*,<sup>14</sup> which he edited along with others.

In his "Systematic Outline," the third section of *Trinity*, Rahner proceeds in seven steps identified in the text as subsections of this third section. In the first step (80–82), he recalls that he is now presuming what we have so far heard, to use his own rich term: "What Scripture, the history of dogma, and the official doctrine of the Church tell us about the Trinity, we must now *say* [in our own way] once more what we have heard" (80). After noting that we need not say everything again, he, in the second and certainly the weightiest step in his presentation, speaks of "Developing the Starting Point" (82–98).

He opens this second step with a simple reference to his previously announced "basic axiom of Trinitarian theology," which will be his starting point for the rest of his reflection on Trinity. He is in fact referring back to his preliminary announcement of what has come to be called Rahner's Rule,<sup>15</sup> namely, "*The 'economic' Trinity is the 'immanent' Trinity and the 'immanent' Trinity is the 'economic' Trinity*" (22).<sup>16</sup> With the affirmation of this much discussed axiom, Rahner is arguing, among many points, that we can in theology no longer either neglect Trinity or treat it in a secondary way. He is in effect insisting that there is but one Trinity, to which we refer as economic when we speak of the Trinity in its self-communication with created reality, and especially humankind, and as immanent Trinity when we refer to the Trinity in itself and its capacity for self-communication. He rather convincingly argues to the truth of this axiom, at least in its more general meaning, when he appeals to the incarnation of the Son. He refers to the witness of Scripture, tradition, and magisterial teaching to ground his position that only the Son could be incarnate as a human being. He maintains this position despite past theological speculation in which one at times affirmed that the Father or the Spirit could as well have been incarnate in a human being. If this single case stands, namely, that only the Son could be incarnate, then the implication is that not only the Son but also the Father and the Spirit give themselves, as they each are but without

Father and Spirit becoming incarnate, in self-communication to the created receiver of such self-communication (21–33).

Rahner then proceeds, in this second step, to develop his presentation on Trinity as an unpacking of what is at least implicitly stated in his axiom. In seven carefully entitled moves within this second step, he starts by speaking of “the necessity of a ‘systematic’ conception of the ‘economic’ Trinity” (82–83). He immediately reveals that his heart is really with a move from Christology and the doctrine of grace to a consideration of the economic Trinity. He then proceeds to a discussion of the immanent Trinity, which will be his focal theme, in light of its self-communication to created receivers of that communication or self-gift.

In a second move, under the heading “The inner relation between the ways of God’s self-communication” (83–87), he speaks of a free divine self-communication, occurring in two distinct ways and in a certain order, to “the spiritual creature in Jesus Christ and in the ‘Spirit’ ” (83). Here Rahner is referring to a primordial experience of God as Father, to stay close to his own terminology, as unoriginate God free and incomprehensible. No lifeless identity, God is absolute mystery primordially present to us.<sup>17</sup> He then asks how we can think through in a coherent way one self-communication of God. He laments the fact that Catholic theology has often considered the twofold divine self-communication in incarnation and in the descent of the Spirit as only extrinsically related through a divine moral decree. If we propose that the Spirit could as well have been incarnate and the Spirit could come without the prior incarnation, then we cannot arrive at “inner, mutually related moments of the one self-communication, through which God (the Father) communicates himself to the world unto absolute proximity” (85). Rahner starts from the opposite assumption, namely, that it is only the Son who appears in history in the flesh and the Spirit who, in turn, brings about acceptance of this appearance. The connection between these two aspects of the one divine self-communication is complementary and necessary, though God remains free to carry out this self-communication or not to do so. Rahner says that incarnation and the doctrine of grace are not understandable without this ordered conception and structure of divine self-communication which is based on properties we know of them from revelation. The doctrine of the Trinity would become a mere verbal accompaniment to salvation history if there were not this necessary and ordered twofold form of the one divine self-communication.

In a third move, “A formal exposition of the concept of ‘God’s self-communication’ ” (87–88), Rahner first acknowledges that the concept of

divine self-communication again raises the classic philosophical and theological question of God's relation to us. He defends the theological acceptableness of his position by stressing that the mystery which God is remains a mystery, a point his trinitarian proposal indeed includes. In further support of the theological acceptability of his position, he notes the absoluteness of God as mystery. He insists on the absolute freedom of God in this self-communication and the fact that "the inner possibility of the self-communication as such . . . can never be perceived. It is experienced as an event in pure facticity" (88n10). He then lists, in a formal way and in admitting there could perhaps be further aspects, a doubled series of four aspects of divine self-communication considered from the perspective of the addressee. "Once we presuppose this concept of the self-communication of God, it reveals to us a fourfold group of aspects: (a) Origin—Future; (b) History—Transcendence; (c) Invitation—Acceptance; (d) Knowledge—Love" (88).

To defend his position, Rahner proceeds in a fourth move within the second step, "Self-communication to a personal recipient" (88–90). Here he reminds us that we are in the first place speaking of these four basic aspects from our perspective as creatures and human beings, but without danger of falling into modalism. This is so first of all because we are speaking of self-communication, which necessarily requires reference to someone to whom the communication is addressed. In the incarnation God truly enters into the human situation and takes it on. So the human situation is not an obstacle to divine self-communication. Second, creation can be considered a moment of God's self-communication since "it is the condition of the possibility of constituting an addressee" (89) though God would not be obliged to carry out such self-communication. However, Christ's human nature is precisely what arises "when God's Logos 'utters' himself outwards." So the four pairs of aspects of divine self-communication, as seen from our standpoint, do not add anything extrinsic to God's self-communication. These structures of the world and the person arise when God creates the addressee of his self-communication. "The self-communication of the free personal God who gives himself as a person (in the modern sense of the word!) presupposes a personal recipient" (89). He turns aside the possibility of such an incarnation occurring in angels who, because they are not spirit and matter, cannot represent the pinnacle of the one world of spirit and matter (90).

Rahner continues in a fifth move, "Towards a better understanding of the single basic aspects of the self-communication" (91–94). With his reference to the addressee of divine self-communication he has now brought

into focus what we had mentioned above concerning his transcendental theological anthropology and the understanding of the experience of God to which it gives rise. But before going on to Rahner's further unpacking of the four pairs of aspects of divine self-communication, we should note that one might argue Rahner is not consistent. At one time he seems to begin his theological reflection on experience of God and Trinity with a transcendental analysis of what it means to be human. At another time he appears to begin with an analysis of the concept of divine self-communication. Rahner would surely respond that one does not exclude the other. Rather, both approaches imply, are intimately related with, and lead to one another.

If we keep in mind the freedom of God's self-communication and the historicity of the addressee, we can appreciate that communication's having an origin and a future. An origin in that God freely creates and gives, and a future in that the creating and giving is for or toward a total communication of God. Origin and future stand in open tension with one another. The future stands opposed, Rahner says, to the origin "as the other moment of something radically new, something separated by a real history of freedom" (91).

In his presentation of the second pair or couple of aspects, namely, history and transcendence, Rahner treats more explicitly of what we have seen him say concerning the experience of God at categorial and transcendental levels. He speaks of the need for God's self-communication to occur at the levels of both history and of the human person's openness to its mysterious horizon if that communication wishes to reach the whole human person. With this difference of levels within the unity of the human person in mind, Rahner speaks of "the difference (in knowledge and in action) between the concrete object and the 'horizon' within which this object comes to stand" (91–92). Rahner had referred to a horizon in the context of spelling out his understanding of the transcendental level of the experience of God. But now he is quick to insist that this reference to a horizon does not mean the human person can retreat to this level. The human person cannot abandon the historical level of space and time in which the other appears. For transcendence has its history in the appearance of the object. Again, the human person is a unity which gives rise to this distinction between historical and transcendental. Here we see Rahner stressing more the importance of the external or historical than he did in his presentation on the experience of God. There he stressed more the depth or transcendental level at which God communicates Godself to the human person as holy mystery. Rahner brings his brief reflection on history and transcendence together by saying

that "if there occurs a self-communication of God to historical man, who is still becoming, it can occur only in this unifying duality of history and transcendence which man is" (92).

The human person is a duality of origin and future as well as of history into transcendence, and so free. Rahner says that "God's self-communication must also mean the difference between *offer* and *acceptance* (the *third* couple of aspects) of this self-communication" (92). God gives Godself in such a way as to be accepted in freedom.

In these reflections Rahner is working with his understanding of the human person and that person's experience of God to move ever closer to identifying two, and only two, ways through which God's self-communication occurs. He makes a major advance with his identification of the last of the four couples of aspects as knowledge and love, the actuation of truth and the actuation of love. He continues working with the notions and realities of unity and difference as he further describes knowledge and love as essential means of communication if that communication is to be addressed to the whole person as such. For this duality in the human person cannot be overcome. Rahner lines up his notions of truth and of love respectively with the perduring categorial and transcendental levels of the human person. Though knowledge and love are perichoretically inter-related in what he calls a transcendental yet ordered unity, the true and the good are really distinct. For Rahner willing is not just an "appetite" of an ultimate unique 'good,' which would be the 'true.' Nor is knowledge only the radiance of love" (93). Will, freedom, and good are love for a person and that person's full well-being. With these distinctions in mind, Rahner then concludes there is no reason to add a third to these two, namely, to knowledge and love. Knowledge and love express the duality of the human person to which God's self-communication takes the form of absolute truth and absolute love (94).

Rahner continues his development of the basic principle that the economic Trinity is the immanent Trinity and vice versa in a sixth move, entitled "The inner unity of the different aspects of God's self-communication" (94–98). He looks at each side of the four sets of aspects and finds that, in the first set, origin—history—offer make up a more easily identifiable unity. Origin and history are the offer of God's self-communication. He insists that the offer in history must be made as the historical presence of the "absolute bringer of salvation" (95). Here he refers theologically to the incarnation of God as an absolute and irrevocable offer of divine self-communication. Linking truth (knowledge) to and identifying it with this



listing of moments of divine self-communication is more challenging. But if we think of truth as revealing what we are in a voluntary moment as an act, we see truth as fidelity, which then fits with the biblical understanding of God as true in history. Divine self-communication makes such an act possible through an "objective presentation, that is, by way of truth" (96).

With this reference in effect to free response in love, Rahner turns to the unity of the four opposed moments: future—transcendence—acceptance—love, the unity of which seems for Rahner harder to establish than that of the first listing of four moments of divine self-communication. For him future means not just something yet to happen but God's giving of Godself as the human person's final consummation. So future opens to and contains transcendence within its reference. Such a consummating future requires that it itself must ground its acceptance. Rahner insists that this bringing about of acceptance must occur without threatening the freedom of the human person responding in acceptance. It is as if here he has sensed something of what pushed early Christian thought to find a way in which the infinite God would be present to human persons that would not crush their freedom but leave space, so to speak, for a free response. Early Christians and Rahner have found this way in the affirmation of the Spirit as, at least implicit in Rahner's thought, a gentler divine presence. Even so, as with the inclusion of knowledge or truth among the first series of moments in divine self-communication, here too Rahner notes the difficulty, at least at first sight, of including love in a series along with future, transcendence, and acceptance. He says we can so link love with the prior three moments or aspects when we understand love as, in the case of divine love, creating "its own acceptance" and "because this love is the freely offered and accepted self-communication of the 'person'" (98).

In his seventh move in the development of his basic axiom, a move entitled "The two fundamental modalities of divine self-communication" (98–99), Rahner argues both to the unity of each of the two series of aspects of divine self-communication and to their perduring distinction. These two series constitute two modalities of divine self-communication, namely, as truth and as love. Truth occurs in history and love opens this history toward the absolute future (98). Rahner brings his thought together here in a short phrase in which he, on the basis again of his prior reference to his transcendental analysis of the human experience of God, lets history stand for origin—history—offer—truth and spirit for future—transcendence—acceptance—love. Though they condition one another, these two modalities are not the same thing. And though they reflect the doubled

nature of the human person, "they derive from the nature of the self-communication of the unoriginate God who remains incomprehensible, whose self-communication remains a mystery both as possible and as actual." He concludes: "*The divine self-communication occurs in unity and distinction in history (of the truth) and in the spirit (of love)*" (99).

Following upon his more developed and longer second step in his systematic presentation of Trinity, Rahner, now in a briefer third step, discusses the "Transition from 'Economic' to 'Immanent' Trinity" (99–101). He uses the word "postulate," with its Kantian connotations, to describe his effort to show that his study of the economic Trinity permits him as well to speak of what the Church refers to as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in the immanent Trinity. He recalls his basic axiom that divine self-communication in history and in spirit must belong to God or else there would be no self-communication. These modalities and differentiations must be in God if we are to affirm a true self-communication and not just a creation. God gives Godself and not just a gift distinct from Godself.

Rahner continues with step four, "How the 'Economic' Trinity is Grounded in the 'Immanent' Trinity" (101–03). He draws several conclusions from what he has said in the previous step. First, and this deserves a fuller quoting: "There is real difference in God as he is in himself between one and the same God insofar as he is—at once and necessarily—the unoriginate who mediates himself to himself (Father), the one who is in truth uttered for himself (Son), and the one who is received and accepted in love for himself (Spirit)—and insofar as, *as a result of this*, he is the one who can freely communicate himself" (101–02). He further concludes that differentiation in God is by double self-communication of the Father.<sup>18</sup> What is communicated is the divinity, "hence the 'essence' of God" (102). The distinctions in God between the original self-communicator and the one uttered and the one who is received, using a close paraphrase of Rahner's words, are to be understood in terms of relations, which are absolutely real.

In a fifth step in his systematic presentation on Trinity, "The Problem of the Concept of 'Person'" (103–15), Rahner spends some time on his concern regarding the modern concept of person. As characterized by individual consciousness and will, this understanding of person leads too easily to a misunderstanding of the classical terms of *persona* and *hypostasis* used to identify the distinct moments in the immanent Trinity. His concern for appropriate ways to speak, in preaching and in catechesis, of God as Trinity reflect his continuing, underlying pastoral preoccupation despite what might appear as rather ethereal speculation.<sup>19</sup> For present purposes

we can concentrate more directly on his own proposal to offer the wording "distinct ways or manners of subsisting" (*distinkte Subsistenzweise*, or as in a note with reference to Karl Barth, "ways of existing" (*Existenzweise*) as a better way of rendering today what we experience and what was earlier referred to by the terms "person" and "*hypostasis*" (74n27).<sup>20</sup> He argues that what we experience is the Spirit as God, the Son as God, and the Father as God, and that this does not require the generalization person (106). He proposes:

The one God subsists in three distinct manners of subsisting. "Distinct manner of subsisting" would then be the explanatory concept, not for person, which refers to that which subsists as distinct, but for the "personality" which makes God's concrete reality, as it meets us in different ways, in precisely this one who meets us *thus*. . . . The single "person" in God would then be: God as existing and meeting us in this determined distinct manner of subsisting. (109–10)

He distinguishes his proposal from that of Barth, namely, the notion of manner of being, in that "manner of subsisting" picks up on the classical emphasis on subsistence in reference to the intra-trinitarian divine relations when the Eastern word *hypostasis* is employed. And manner of subsisting suggests more the unity of God than does the notion of divine person as such. While not implying a specifically Latin approach to the Trinity, Rahner's, way of speaking does not carry with it the idea of three subjectivities in God.

Rahner brings to a close his systematic exposition of the Trinity in step seven (115–20) with a discussion of problems he sees arising from the use of the psychological model to understand Trinity and in step eight with a modest reference to what he terms his very unsystematic way of presenting his systematic doctrine of the Trinity. But he feels that he has covered all that "the Bible or revelation or kerygmatic necessity invited us to say about the Trinity" (120).

Before commenting on possible Idealist influences on Rahner's systematic presentation of Trinity, we would do well to gather a few more of his remarks as found in his two articles on Trinity in *Sacramentum Mundi*, "Trinity, Divine" and "Trinity in Theology." He says we can start from the occurrence of divine self-communication in the history of salvation, namely, from a consideration of the incarnation of the Son and the experience of the grace of the Spirit. With this reference to a starting point for his reflection,

he raises again the question we have seen before. He seems at times to begin his reflection from an anthropological perspective, namely, from the point of view of the recipient of divine self-communication. He at other times begins his reflection with a more formal analysis of the structure of divine self-communication and, here, is starting from the occurrence of divine self-communication in the history of salvation. As was previously mentioned, some would criticize him as being inconsistent with regard to his starting point. However, it would seem fairly clear that these three proposed starting points are simply aspects of the overall reality of divine self-communication which includes its reception, as Rahner himself observed in 1965.<sup>21</sup>

In these *Sacramentum Mundi* articles Rahner refers explicitly to the experience of salvation by the individual and the collectivity. It is helpful to remember that he may speak mostly of the individual human being but, in the course of his reference to the New Testament, he refers as well to the experience of the collectivity. He realizes that, *mutatis mutandis*, what is said of the individual is applicable as well to groups and the collectivity in general. Reading these articles reinforces our understanding that Rahner conceives of divine self-communication in the Spirit (grace) and in the hypostatic union as one and the same free act. Each is the condition of the other. Again, both the act of creation and personal divine self-communication are necessary and eternal acts in as they are identical with God's being, "though free as regards the world."<sup>22</sup>

Rahner refers in a qualified sense to the two divine processions, identical with the external missions, "as the 'potentialities,' of the twofold self-communication, i.e., still in the light of the economy of salvation. . . . (These 'potentialities' are not of course entities in God which have to go through the stage of being actuated)."<sup>23</sup> With his qualification indicated in parentheses, he clearly intends to distinguish his position concerning initial divine fullness from that of Schelling. He continues, then, in a more Hegelian vein, with of course a corrective remark stressing God's freedom in relation to the world:

But since the processions, in their actual reality, have a free (contingent, so to speak) relation to the world, they must be proper to God not merely "in himself" but also "for himself." They must also have an "immanent" significance. It may therefore be affirmed that the real distinction between the two processions is constituted by a twofold immanent self-communication, inasmuch as the unoriginated God (the Father) is he who is expressed

in the truth for himself (the Son) and he who is received and accepted in love for himself (the Spirit), and hence is he who can freely communicate himself *ad extra* in this twofold way.<sup>24</sup>

Of interest as well is Rahner's note that self should be reserved for what he calls "the ultimate concrete 'individuality'" and thus for God who subsists in three ways.<sup>25</sup> For Rahner, then, God, the divine self, is free in relation to creation and personal self-communication because a created world does not reduce the radicalness of God's relationship to that world in personal self-communication.<sup>26</sup>

### Idealist Family Resemblances

In our presentation of selected elements of Rahner's trinitarian thought, we have moved from a consideration of God as uncreated grace to a review of his analysis of the twofold structure of human, and indeed more explicitly Christian, experience of God on to his quite succinct presentations on Trinity. In a wider study we would need to refer more directly to the starting point in his transcendental theological anthropology, namely, the fact that human beings question, a fact which, when so questioned, of course confirms the reality of human beings as those who question. In a move with a Heideggerian ring to it, he says that humans question their own being, which then means they have some prior experience of being. With this move, he has arrived at an affirmation of what he refers to as the pre-thematic awareness (*Vorgriff*) of being as horizon. This horizon he identifies with God as absolute mystery. As we have noted, in his trinitarian thought he further identifies God, as absolute mystery, with God the Father. While remaining within a certain overall Kantian context, Rahner has in effect moved from Kant's unacceptable distinction between knower and the unknowable thing-in-itself to a pre-thematic moment of union of self and other. He continues this move in his discussion of the finite human self and its transcendental awareness of being, which latter in its absoluteness he identifies with God and, finally again, with God the Father within the Trinity. Given this identification of the horizon of being as mystery with God the Father, Rahner has likewise, at least in a way vaguely recognizable, transformed both the Kantian thing-in-itself and Schelling's notion of ground (*Grund*) into a notion of God the Father as absolute mystery.<sup>27</sup>

With these transformations, Rahner is well poised to continue developing his thought on the Son and the Spirit in us and in history as well as within the immanent Trinity.

As several have noted, there is a strong Hegelian cast, at times mediated through his encounter with Heidegger, to Rahner's overall philosophy and theology, and to his trinitarian thinking in particular.<sup>28</sup> By way of preliminary example we might note that Rahner himself established a parallel between his thought and that of Hegel when, as Winfried Corduan points out, Rahner introduced a lecture on Thomistic epistemology. In that introduction he said: "The reflection that we are going to make can be grouped into three equal parts. In Thomistic terms, these are: the judgment; the light of the agent intellect; God, pure being, pure thought. And if we adopt Hegelian terminology corresponding to the three parts of his *Phenomenology of Spirit*, we would have: consciousness (*Bewusstsein*); self-consciousness (*Selbstbewusstsein*); absolute Spirit."<sup>29</sup>

But before we turn more directly to Rahner's thought on Trinity and its possible relationships to Idealist trinitarian thought, it will be helpful to recall several rather significant "similarities," to use a phrase Corduan employs in his study on Hegelian elements in Rahner's transcendental method. Corduan will help us situate very briefly Rahner's trinitarian reflection within the wider context of Rahner's overall philosophical approach to what it means to be a human who knows him- or herself, the world, and God.

Corduan<sup>30</sup> identifies a series of problems which both Hegel and Rahner faced in the aftermath of Kant as well as parallel solutions each of them offered in at least partial response to those problems. Among many considerations, two are of paramount importance, given our concern to trace Idealist influences and impact on subsequent trinitarian thinking. The first of these significant similarities, or for us better here family resemblances, between the thought of Hegel and that of Rahner is the initial affirmation that we do not start with a self which then approaches an other than itself. Rather, for Hegel and Rahner, each in his own way, we begin with an initial unity. For Hegel, this is the unity of thought and being as the first moment in the dialectical development of logical or pure thought, the being of thought. For Rahner, this is the initial moment of unity of human knower and being which is known, the thought of being. With more specific reference to our interest in the experience of God, this initial Rahnerian moment is the *Vorbegriff* or preconceptual grasp of God as the mysterious horizon of being. At this moment, human and divine are not present to

one another as self to other, but in a way as self to self, subject to subject, what is on the part of God quasi-formal causality, namely, immediate divine presence at the pre-thematic level of human consciousness.

This starting point of knowledge in an initial unity is common to both Hegel and Rahner. It gives rise, for each of them, to an other from within the initial subject itself. This is the case for Hegel in all forms of knowing and for Rahner both on a more general level of human knowledge as such and on the grounding level of human pre-thematic awareness of God. Corduan points out that in each case, namely, for Hegel and for Rahner, the self as initial unity of self and other gives rise to the other. For Hegel this occurs as the thinking through of what the self is initially, that is, a one-sided unity requiring an other to come to itself fully and explicitly. For Rahner, this occurs in human knowing as the recognition that the other is "within" the subject which latter, in its act of knowing, gives rise to a knowledge of the other in which the self becomes the other. Thus, both Hegel and Rahner see the need for the self as such to come to itself through an other arising internally from the subject. This arising occurs, for Rahner, as the conversion to the phantasm, a Thomist notion of the way in which the self becomes the other in knowing the other which arises out of it in this conversion.<sup>31</sup> Here we come again to the notion that Rahner places the focus of knowledge especially on a move inward in order to move outward. As Corduan says, in Rahner we recognize a solution to the epistemological question of how we know the other by a turn inward to the subject, a turn Hegel had taken before Rahner. Hegel and Rahner, each in his own way, see subjectivity as a movement from initial self to other on to recognition and realization of the initial self in the other, a movement of inclusive subjectivity. Each of them speaks of subjectivity as, in its structure, a more monosubjectively formulated movement.

We could with profit learn considerably more by exploring further Corduan's identification of various parallels between the thought of Hegel and that of Rahner on the level of transcendental theological method. But for present purposes we can be satisfied simply to build upon the observations, common to Hegel and to Rahner though differently formulated, concerning an initial unity of self and other, the arising of the other from within the self, and the resultant understanding of monosubjectively formulated structured movement of inclusive subjectivity. Though differently formulated by each of them, this movement is, in its formal structuring, common to both Hegel and Rahner and surely reflects a strong influence of Hegel upon Rahner.

With more specific reference now to Rahner's trinitarian thought, we turn to a consideration of what he prefers to call distinct manners of subsisting, namely, God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Rahner does not follow either Hegel's or Schelling's lead in establishing, each in his own way and Schelling of course with a certain presupposition of initial fullness, the Trinity as a dynamic movement of spirit from potentiality to actuality. In his presentation of immanent Trinity Rahner starts with the Father as unoriginated, fully actualized divinity. This divine self needs, in order to be divine person characterized by consciousness and will, to utter himself within the immanent Trinity as truth and to be the reception and acceptance of that truth in love. This structured movement is one of self-othering and return, a movement, formally speaking, the same for Hegel and for Rahner both with regard to knowledge as such and as characterizing the trinitarian dynamic in particular. For both Hegel and Rahner immanent Trinity is necessarily a movement of inclusive divine subjectivity. For Hegel, immanent Trinity needs a further externalization to become fully actualized. For Rahner, however, the immanent Trinity would suffice for establishing the triune God as a real movement of inclusive divine subjectivity. But if there is a freely created world and a further free divine self-communication in truth and love, then the economic Trinity is likewise for Rahner a movement of divine subjectivity inclusive of the world. In effect, Rahner has formulated his own version of what Hegel had called the true infinite, namely, that outside of which there is not.

With this reference to economic Trinity as a movement of inclusive divine subjectivity, we need to turn to a consideration of certain aspects of Rahner's understanding of divine self-communication as moments of incarnation and grace, respectively, truth and love. First of all, the inner procession of the Son from the Father and His external mission of incarnation constitute the highest and unique exemplifications of Rahner's way of making his own the Hegelian notion of a move from subject to other. In each case, whether regarding immanent Trinity or economic Trinity, the Son is a symbol of the Father, for the Son is the expression of the Father. In an important statement, which further exemplifies Rahner's formally speaking Hegelian turn to the subject, Rahner writes:

The Logos is the "word" of the Father, his perfect "image" . . . his self-expression. . . . The Word—as reality of the immanent divine life—is "generated" by the Father as the *image* and *expression* of the Father . . . this process is necessarily given with the divine



act of self-knowledge, and without it the absolute act of divine self-possession in knowledge cannot exist. . . . The Father is himself by the very fact that he opposes to himself the image which is of the same essence as himself, as the person who is other than himself; and so he possesses himself. But this means that the Logos is the "symbol" of the Father, in the very sense which we have given the word: the inward symbol which remains distinct from what is symbolized, which is constituted by what is symbolized, where what is symbolized expresses itself and possesses itself. . . . It is because God "must" "express" himself inwardly that he can also utter himself outwardly.<sup>32</sup>

Following upon this important citation, we may well find it helpful to bring together in more succinct fashion several of the points brought out so far concerning Rahner on Trinity before returning to a consideration of further family resemblances between the trinitarian thought of Rahner and that of German Idealists. Rahner speaks of the Father's self-communication through the presence of the Spirit at the transcendental level of human experience and through the appearance of the historical savior, Jesus Christ, at the categorial level of that experience. The Trinity is, then, for Rahner a movement of self-communication of the Father as holy mystery, Son as divine self-gift, and Spirit as the one who enables the acceptance of this self-gift. The unoriginate Father mediates himself to himself. The Son is in truth uttered for himself and is the symbol of the Father in which the Father is other than himself and through which he possesses himself. The Spirit is the one who is received and accepted in love for who the Spirit is. These are three distinct ways or manners of divine subsisting making up one movement of divine self-communication. In this self-communication, the immanent Trinity is the economic Trinity and vice versa. Otherwise it would not be self-communication and self-gift. Rahner is quick to stress that this divine self-communication arises out of abundance and not as a movement from potencies to actualities,<sup>33</sup> again surely a reference to Schelling's idea of potencies becoming persons through their action in creation. Still, it is interesting to note a further possible family resemblance between the thought of Schelling and that of Rahner. Schelling had spoken of the Son's causality in terms of formal causality, whereas Rahner himself refers to this as quasi-formal causality and later on simply as formal causality.

With specific reference to the incarnation, Rahner agrees with Hegel that there is a sense in which every human being is open to the presence

of the divine. Yet in each of their two systems or systematic thinking the incarnation must also occur as one specific individual in history. More specifically, in Rahner's view it is especially this incarnation of the Son which occurs as the highest and unique instantiation of the more general relationship between human and divine.<sup>34</sup> The human nature of Christ is divinized in its reception of the divine *Logos*. Given the social character of the human nature the *Logos* takes on, all of humanity is in principle divinized as well. And from the perspective of the impact of the incarnation on the trinitarian God, Rahner argues for a history of God established on the basis of this incarnation of the divine *Logos* in a human nature. In his adoption of this Idealist theme of the history of God, Rahner insists that there is no change in God, as such, in Godself. But there is change in God insofar as God is, through the incarnation of the *Logos*, involved in human history which receives its meaning from the incarnation and becomes the history of God.<sup>35</sup> So, there is no internal change in God but there is external change rooted in God's plenitude that enables God, in the *Logos*, to become fully other than what God is in Godself. God the Father, then, gives Himself to humankind in and through the incarnation of the divine *Logos*, which is the self-gift of God to humankind at the categorial level of human experience and, thus, in human history.<sup>36</sup>

As we have seen, for Rahner God's one divine act of free self-communication occurs as well in a second and parallel manner, namely, as the movement of grace and love. The Holy Spirit is the distinct manner of divine subsistence sent to humankind at the transcendental level of human experience, assuring the efficacious reception of the Father's gift of the Son to humankind and, thus, as well the reception of the Father as absolute mystery. The Holy Spirit is the self-gift of God to humankind at the transcendental level. We could speak of this gift as a sighing and a gentle, softer divine presence allowing for a response in human freedom in a way that a more direct presence of the Father as absolute mystery would not and could not. As has already been mentioned, here Rahner seems to be making a move similar to that of the Cappadocians who, in a Neo-Platonic framework which they creatively modified, sensed the value of the Spirit as a way to create a space in which both God and humans would be free in the relationship between them.<sup>37</sup>

In this doubled divine involvement in history and in the depths of the human person at the transcendental level, Son and Spirit assure that all is taken up into and returns to God the Father. Again, the immanent Trinity as such is itself, for Rahner, in its internal fullness a form of inclusive divine

subjectivity. In view of Rahner's distinguishing between God as unchangeable in Godself and changeable in light of the incarnation, the sending of Son and Spirit can suggest that for Rahner the economic Trinity is an enriching, but perhaps more delicately phrased, enriched movement of inclusive divine subjectivity. At the end of an overview presentation of Rahner on Trinity, Vincent Holzer brings out a further aspect of Rahner's understanding of divine subjectivity when Holzer writes that God "manifests himself as Being who is self-differentiated in an act of pure interior donation and of which the Father is the source and the goal."<sup>38</sup> This understanding of God arises out of the divine external self-donation, in which likewise the Father is source and goal.

There have been several criticisms of Rahner's creative reflection on Trinity.<sup>39</sup> We might, for example, note Rahner's own hesitation about whether to treat Trinity at the beginning of a theological treatise or at the end, or perhaps both.<sup>40</sup> That hesitation helps draw attention to the fact that he himself did not explicitly structure his own widely ranging theological writing along more explicitly trinitarian lines, even in his monumental work, *Foundations of Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity*. Nicholas Adams<sup>41</sup> has generously placed this work in its wider context, namely, as an effort to help theology students passing through a certain period of crisis. In further partial response, we might note that Rahner was very systematic in his thought, though he did not as such lay out a system or, perhaps more exactly, a more traditional, full-blown systematic theology. He usually worked in depth on specific questions, as is witnessed to in his multivolume *Theological Investigations*.<sup>42</sup> His basic argument that the immanent Trinity is the economic Trinity and vice versa has undergone criticism while also being widely embraced.<sup>43</sup> A rather fundamental question has been raised as to why for Rahner there should be a creation and further divine self-communication?<sup>44</sup> For Hegel the need for creation and then for incarnation was clearly rooted in the movement of his thought, from the point of view of his system as a whole, from potentiality to actuality. But, at least in the context of Rahner's discussion on Trinity, Rahner tends to bring in creation and more specifically creation of humankind rather quickly, and almost unexpectedly, as a necessary presupposition for divine self-communication. There needs to be a recipient of such communication outside the Trinity if this self-communication is to be received there. However, why such divine self-communication to such a recipient if it is not needed as such? Rahner would surely respond by referring in one way or another to the ancient adage that "good is diffusive of itself" ("*bonum diffusivum sui*").

He would as well of course simply say that the divine self-communication has occurred and we work from there. It may simply be that the overall Idealist working with the notion of a subject as that which others itself in order to come to itself was so prevalent and powerful in Rahner's own philosophical and theological context that it seemed self-evident.

Again, in continuing this reflection on various criticisms of Rahner's thought on Trinity we could note that, though Rahner spoke so much of the Son and the Father, some have felt he neglected the New Testament presentations of that relationship from the perspective of the Son and so had more difficulty recognizing three divine persons.<sup>45</sup> This lack of stress on that relationship from the perspective of the Son may be symptomatic of a further hesitation one might have concerning Rahner's Hegelian emphasis on the arising of the other out of the subject or self as well as Rahner's strong emphasis on internal experience. Nicholas Adams<sup>46</sup> has suggested that we can better understand that latter emphasis if we recall the historical context within which Rahner was working and which he seemed to want to modify somewhat. In that context great importance was laid on the institutional and on the role of authority. Others have felt uncomfortable with his notion of quasi-formal causality and stress on grace as God's intimate presence through the Holy Spirit within the depths of the human heart. Yet it would be hard to imagine working with the idea of experience of God without affirming some form of a real divine presence of God as other to the finite self in human experience.<sup>47</sup>

Following in line with the Idealist tendency characteristic of Hegel's philosophical reinterpretation of the truth of Trinity, Rahner has developed an understanding of Trinity as a single movement of divine subjectivity. And in so doing he has brought together, as Hegel had in his own way done before him, various theological themes such as incarnation, grace and especially his emphasis on uncreated grace, experience of God, revelation, reconciliation, and salvation in one basic move of divine self-communication and self-gift to humankind. This Hegelian and indeed overall Idealist practice of bringing together various theological themes allowed Rahner in his own way to maintain elements of what he refers to as the psychological approach to Trinity. However, in doing so he was able to avoid appealing in a more extrinsic way to the functioning of human mind and will. Once it is accepted that God has in fact communicated Godself to humankind in direct self-communication, Rahner can proceed with a reflection that moves ahead on the basis of an appeal to an internally generated structure of subjectivity. He no longer needs to refer to factors extrinsic to that movement

of subjectivity, or at least appeal to them in an extrinsic way, in support of the analysis of that movement.

We might note then, by way of comparison, that though Rahner's notion of divine self-communication and Barth's notion of self-revelation are similar in formal structure one to the other and both to Hegel's notion of spirit as self-development, Rahner's shows greater affinities with Roman Catholic theological outlooks whereas Barth's is more compatible with Protestant sensitivities.

Finally, with his fundamental notion of divine self-communication Rahner has picked up on and run with an idea rather more latent in Hegel's thought. For there is in Hegel's thought in general, and at times more explicit especially with reference to the death of Christ, a sense of self-sacrifice and self-gift. In that thought the movement, from the point of view of Hegel's speculative dialectic, is always one from an initial moment to a second moment and then an enriched return to the first moment. In each of these moves, the prior move involves a going over into, appearance as, or development into an at least momentary other, in effect a giving over of oneself to another, a move reflecting in formal structure that of self-gift. So, despite the fact that these moves are described by Hegel as moves from unrealized to realized, his philosophy can be seen at least implicitly as a philosophy of generosity. What Rahner has done, especially in his trinitarian thought characterized by family resemblances with that of Hegel and Schelling as well as that of Barth, has been to bring to the fore especially Hegel's at least implicit generous move of self-gift. So Rahner's theology of the Trinity becomes a theology of divine generosity.

## Wolffhart Pannenberg

### *Reciprocally Self-Distinguishing Divine Persons*

Pannenberg (1928–2014) many years ago wrote “An Autobiographical Sketch”<sup>1</sup> in which he discussed aspects of his early childhood in Eastern Germany before, during, and after the Second World War. He spoke movingly of those early years as well as of his subsequent spiritual and intellectual journey until about 1988. His family had left the church already in the 1930s. In 1944 he had begun reading Nietzsche. Then, on January 6, 1945, he took part in what he described as an extraordinary event which occurred while he was taking a long walk home from school: “I found myself absorbed into the light of the setting sun and for one eternal moment dissolved in the light surrounding me.”<sup>2</sup> After a time in the army at the age of sixteen, including being a prisoner of war under the British, he continued his studies and began to read Kant. He developed an interest in Christianity and found that his professor of German literature did not seem to fit the more negative description of a Christian that Nietzsche had laid out. Pannenberg wrote, “Contrary to my expectations, this teacher obviously enjoyed and appreciated the fullness of human life in all its forms, which he was not supposed to do, according to Nietzsche’s description of the Christian mind.”<sup>3</sup> Pannenberg continued to try to understand his 1945 experience and went on to further studies. In the spring of 1947 he enrolled in philosophy and theology at the Humboldt University in East Berlin. He became fascinated with what he found in his exploration of Christianity and saw that he would spend the rest of his life as

a theologian while continuing "philosophical studies with at least equal intensity."<sup>4</sup> Over the ensuing years the list of names of his professors such as Gerhard von Rad reads like a *Who's Who* of the then German philosophical and theological academy. In 1955 he was ordained a Lutheran minister in Heidelberg. After a doctoral dissertation on John Duns Scotus and a habilitation-writing on analogy, he taught systematic theology at various German universities, spending many years from 1968 on at the University of Munich. He often taught and lectured in the United States. His work encompasses a wide range of interests from theological anthropology to systematic theology, science, world religions, ecumenism, and beyond. He brought to his study an open Lutheran stance,<sup>5</sup> ready to examine even his own tradition's specific theological positions and to enter into dialogue with others, secular or religious, around the world.

It will be helpful now to alert us to a couple aspects of Pannenberg's complex trinitarian thought. In rather Schellingian fashion he writes of reciprocally self-distinguishing divine Persons whose unity arises out of their interaction. In that interaction, each of the divine Persons acts in a way recognizable as giving concrete expression to the Hegelian notion that subject or person is constituted relationally as self-dedication one to another, in this case as one to the others.

### Pannenberg on Trinity

Pannenberg himself spells out his mature vision of Trinity in critical and creative discussion with earlier and then contemporary trinitarian thinkers. He does this in the first volume of his *Systematic Theology*,<sup>6</sup> published in German in 1988. This more concentrated presentation on Trinity will permit us to focus on it, though his trinitarian thought pervades, and to a great extent structures, all three volumes of his study. But already from early on in his career as a Christian theologian the notion of Trinity was operative in his theology.<sup>7</sup> By 1981 he had written that his development of the doctrine of God, which is what his *Systematic Theology* is about,<sup>8</sup> "will be more thoroughly trinitarian than any example I know of."<sup>9</sup>

In chapter 5 of the first volume of his *Systematic Theology*, Pannenberg sketches out the essential lines of his trinitarian thinking. He entitles this chapter quite directly, "The Trinitarian God," and lays out his argument in four parts. After a briefer review of the first and second parts, we will focus at greater length on the third part, "Distinction and Unity of the Divine

Persons,” and on the fourth part, “The World as the History of God and the Unity of the Divine Essence.” We will then draw attention in more explicit fashion to possible Idealist influences on his trinitarian thought.

In the first part of chapter 5, “The God of Jesus and the Beginnings of the Doctrine of the Trinity” (259–80), Pannenberg chooses several New Testament texts. He selects them in order, in a first move, to introduce and ground his basic insight that the three divine Persons are identified there at least initially by the fact that they distinguish themselves from one another. He likewise takes a first look at several major Patristic thinkers who relatively early on in the history of trinitarian thought develop, in various directions, roles and, consequently, identities of the three divine Persons. He pays particular attention to ways in which such Patristic thinkers identify various bases on which they propose to affirm the unity of Father, Son, and Spirit.

Pannenberg begins his reflection in this first part of chapter 5 with reference to Jesus’ message. Jesus announces the kingdom or reign of God is at hand, an announcement inextricably tied in with the notion of the God of Israel as Father (259). Pannenberg finds a witness to this linkage, for example, in the very form and content of the Our Father. For Jesus, Father is the proper name for God (262). Pannenberg insists that this reference to God as Father does not in essence carry with it sexual distinction (261). Rather, it refers to the goodness of God described variously in so many New Testament texts, a number of which Pannenberg cites explicitly.<sup>10</sup> Interestingly, he speaks of the Father as the “*divine Other* in terms of whom Jesus saw himself and to whom he referred his disciples and hearers” (262, emphasis added). Citing further New Testament references, he brings attention to the fact that Jesus stresses the difference between himself and the Father and “distinguishes between the future of God’s rule and its presence with his own coming” (263). Yet Jesus also recognized his closeness to the work of the Father, a closeness justifying his being identified as the Son. Indeed, given the imminence of the coming of the Father’s kingdom, there can be no further expectation of talk about God beyond that of Jesus (264). Furthermore, New Testament references to Jesus as *Kyrios* indicate the full deity of the Son (265–66). Pannenberg then makes the point that there is a third here, namely, the Spirit of whom Paul and John as well as other New Testament writers variously speak. “The Spirit of God is the mode of God’s presence in Jesus as he formerly was of God’s presence in the prophets or in all creation.” Pannenberg finds further indication of such a third in New Testament reference to the inclusion of believers in the sonship of Jesus, resulting in a Trinity rather than “a biunity of the Father and the



Son" (268). But the New Testament speaks of interrelationships without clarifying them (269).

Following on this rather condensed but rich initial New Testament reflection, Pannenberg delights in citing several times the thought of Athanasius, who had written of the cooperation of Spirit and Word in creation. Athanasius and the Cappadocians stressed "the participation of all three hypostases in all divine activity as a consequence and condition of their unity of essence" (271). But this still did not as such give a basis for distinction among the hypostases. Athanasius himself, though not the Cappadocians, argued in addition that the Father would not be the Father without the Son. However, the further conclusion that Jesus was the Son "in self-distinction from the Father on the one side and the Spirit on the other" (273) could only arise, according to Pannenberg, through the historical revelation of the Son. In speaking of one principle in Father, Son, and Spirit, Athanasius had overcome subordinationism by defending the consubstantiality of the three. But, according to Pannenberg, arguing to a divine unity that would capture the essence of the Old Testament insistence on monotheism still remained a challenge for the early Church. More or less exclusive insistence on relations of origin (*Ursprungsrelation*) and identification of the Father with the divine essence in order to assure divine unity seemed to lead to subordinationism. Athanasius, for his part, had in fact anchored the unity of the Son with the Father not in a relation of origin but "on the logic of the relation that is posited when we call God 'Father'" (278). For Athanasius, the Father could not be thought of as Father without reference to the Son. Consequently, the Son was fully divine. And Athanasius continued this argument, using it in relation to the Spirit as well (279). He applied "the relational conditioning of personal distinction, as mutual conditioning, to the Father as well, so that the Father can be thought of as unbegotten only in relation to the Son" (280). Pannenberg ends this first part of the fifth chapter by saying that we will have to come to affirm the unity of Father, Son, and Spirit in a new and different way beyond what has been done in the ancient past.

In the second half of the first part of chapter 5, Pannenberg has reviewed the early history of trinitarian thought, focusing on various attempts to affirm divine unity while assuring an appropriate understanding of the three. Now, in the second part of chapter 5, entitled "The Place of the Doctrine of the Trinity in the Dogmatic Structure and the Problem of Finding a Basis for Trinitarian Statements" (280–99), he continues his, generally speaking, chronologically structured review of thinkers. He moves

from High Scholasticism through to Barth in the early twentieth century, finding that most trinitarian thinkers considered provide examples of further, mostly for him unsuccessful, efforts made to ground divine threeness in divine unity.

Of these efforts we can note three approaches in particular. The first is that of Thomas Aquinas. Pannenberg describes him as moving in the *Summa theologiae* from a consideration of God as first cause of the world, with the notion of divine simplicity as a sort of ongoing regulatory reference, to three divine subsistent relations. He finds in Thomas a series of deductions from first cause to trinitarian statements, deductions which despite careful nuance by Thomas seem for Pannenberg not to be coherent with Thomas's insistence that we come to know the Trinity only through revelation (288).<sup>11</sup>

The second approach, of particular importance for us, is the recognition by Pannenberg that it was German Idealism which revived philosophical and theological interest in Trinity. He credits Lessing with having again brought to the fore the notion of spirit "as an expression of the self-understanding of God in self-awareness." And he goes on to say: "The doctrine of God which was developed in German Idealism on the basis of a philosophy of self-consciousness adopted the thoughts of Lessing and impressively expanded them. In Hegel's philosophy of the absolute Spirit the renewal of the doctrine of the Trinity in terms of self-conscious Spirit took classical form" (292). But for Pannenberg the problem with this Idealist approach and, more generally that of others trying to derive trinitarian distinctions from one divine essence, was that such an approach resulted in a single divine personality, an understanding not compatible with the notion of Trinity (294).<sup>12</sup>

The third approach to which we should refer was that of thinking of God in terms of love. Pannenberg here considers quite a series of trinitarian thinkers. Among them, he says that Hegel, for example, recognized in love the notion of plurality but was not able to work it out in terms of spirit's self-consciousness (295). He mentions as well Richard of St. Victor, for whom it is not evident that the divine Persons are truly constituted by love. So often trinitarian theories rooted in the notion of love presuppose a prior subject who loves, rather than three Persons who are love. In that case such theories easily end up in subordinationism. Working with the notion of love is for Pannenberg better than working with the idea of self-consciousness, for it leaves more room for plurality. Yet even the three divine Persons themselves are too easily conceived as subjects who love rather than as themselves each being love as such. In this case, close as the Persons may

be, their required independence does not easily allow for the conclusion to unity. Pannenberg is in effect distinguishing between "loving" and "being love," that is, being "constituted by love," with only this latter adequately reflecting the Johannine idea (1 John 4:8) that God is love (295–98).

In this second part of chapter 5 Pannenberg continues his argument in the form of a review of various efforts in the history of trinitarian thought to work from a consideration of the divine essence to affirm the unity of the three divine Persons. He concludes, more specifically, that neither the concept of spirit nor the notion of love as such provides an adequate basis for correctly affirming divine unity. Moving in this way from unity to threeness leads to either modalism or subordinationism. In the following part 3 of chapter 5 he will present his own proposal for rightly relating oneness and threeness in God. Here, however, he closes this second part of the chapter with the announcement that to seek a basis for the doctrine of the Trinity we must refer to the way in which the Scriptures present and relate Father, Son, and Spirit in the event of revelation. He sees in this the "material justification for the demand that the doctrine of the Trinity must be based on the biblical witness to revelation or on the economy of salvation" (299).

Pannenberg tellingly focuses on the divine Persons when he entitles the third part of chapter 5 "Distinction and Unity of the Divine Persons" (300–27). Here he develops his core presentation on Trinity in three subsections. He calls the first "The Revelation of God in Jesus Christ as the Starting Point, and the Traditional Terminology of the Doctrine of the Trinity" (300–08). As this first subsection's title indicates, Pannenberg provides further precision to his conclusion to the previous, second part of chapter 5 and then examines the question of trinitarian terminology, especially in relation to terms used in New Testament texts.

So Pannenberg first repeats and gives greater precision to his position that the doctrine of the Trinity is to be systematically grounded in and developed on the basis of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ (300). He recognizes that there are no explicit references in the New Testament to God existing in three Persons. And triadic formulations do not as such provide a sufficient basis for establishing the doctrine of the Trinity (302). He repeats his earlier remark that "Scripture clearly refers separately to the deity of the Son and the Spirit. But even in these passages it is not clear how the deity of the Son and Spirit relate to that of the Father" (302–03). He respects the fact that theologians work with speculative notions such as that of relations of origin as long as doing so does not lead to subordinationism or the identification of the Father as the sole divine subject (303). He

then reminds the reader that Barth and, in a more precise way, Hegel had grounded divine self-relationality in self-consciousness, an approach from which he distances himself. He starts from, and roots his own position in, the concrete relationship of Jesus to the Father, repeating his initial remark made at the beginning of chapter 5. There he links together Jesus' message about the coming of the Kingdom and Jesus' relation to the Father (304).<sup>13</sup>

Pannenberg has made it clear that in his reference to revelation he is not going to look for explicitly trinitarian New Testament references. Rather, he will base his doctrine of the Trinity on the New Testament relation of Jesus to the Father and the Spirit. With this clarification in mind, he draws out some implications of his approach for the way in which classical terminology has been used in trinitarian thought. For example, he sees Eastern thought as employing more Johannine terminology when it distinguishes between the generation of the Son and the procession of the Spirit. In the West, medieval speculation commonly refers to the processions of Son and Spirit, with the former described as begetting and the latter as breathing. He considers the references to begetting and breathing problematic in that relevant New Testament texts do not justify referring to eternal begetting or breathing. He does not intend here so much to deny that we can work with such notions. But he warns of the danger that we may excessively simplify the relations among Father, Son, and Spirit by reducing those relations to relations of begetting and breathing (305–07). He thus opens the way to his discussion of multiple relations among Father, Son, and Spirit established through their reciprocal self-distinction.

Pannenberg moves into theological high gear as he lays out his own approach to divine threeness and oneness in this key second subsection of chapter 5's third part, "The Reciprocal Self-Distinction of Father, Son, and Spirit as the Concrete Form of Trinitarian Relations" (308–19). Here he starts in a way quite compatible with Lutheran traditions but focuses on the revealed God rather than the hidden God: "God is infinitely above all that is human and creaturely. He may be known only through the Son." And he adds, "Only through the Father is Jesus known as the Son (Matt. 11:7)" (308). In this second subsection, Pannenberg continues from this quite Lutheran *sola scriptura* starting point, following an overall method for arguing his theological positions. In that method, generally stated, he cites specific New Testament texts which describe or at least identify the role or roles of the divine Person or Persons under consideration. Then he draws inferences<sup>14</sup> from this role or these roles permitting him to speak of mutually self-distinguishing (*wechselseitige Selbstunterscheidung*) personal relationships,

temporal and eternal, to which this role or these roles witness. He bases these inferences on logical analyses of the role or roles identified in the New Testament with reference, as controlling considerations, to the overall notions of God and divine Lordship with which he is working. The fact that Pannenberg presents together a series of New Testament citations, followed by a page or two of further reflection and remarks, and then repeats this pattern serves as a first confirmation of this method as the one according to which he is more generally proceeding.

The first time Pannenberg works with this method or way of proceeding he addresses the question of the Son's distinguishing himself from the Father and the consequent self-distinguishing of the Father from the Son. A sampling of New Testament texts to which Pannenberg refers (308–10) will give us an idea of how he starts with such texts to establish the Son's self-distinguishing as a constitutive element of the Son's relationship to the Father. He begins by recalling that the Son's role is to glorify the Father, as indicated in the first three verses of the Our Father (Luke 11:2ff, Matt. 6:9–10). He refers as well to John 17:4 and the High Priestly prayer. The Son serves the will of the Father (John 10:36ff) in establishing the lordship of God. And Pannenberg then says, "The title 'Son' reflects Jesus' message of the Father. The reflection of the content of the message falls on his person" (309). He continues with citations from John (for example, 8:18) identifying Jesus as one who distinguishes himself from the Father who witnesses to him. Among many further New Testament indications that Jesus distinguishes himself from the Father, Pannenberg points to Mark 10:18, where Jesus says only one is good, only God alone. He appeals to this and other New Testament references to Jesus' subordination of himself to the Father in order to continue his argument to the important role the New Testament attributes to Jesus in distinguishing himself from the Father.

With this New Testament witness at hand, Pannenberg moves to establish this role of self-distinguishing as constitutive element in the self-identity of the Son not only on earth but in the eternal God (310–12). For not only does Jesus distinguish himself from God insofar as he is a human person, but he also indicates that he is so close to God in his relation to God and in his sending into the world that "God in eternity is Father only in relation to him." Since the Father is Father only insofar as He is in relation to the Son, the Son "shares his deity as the eternal counterpart of the Father" (310). Pannenberg brings forth various arguments in favor of this position. Among them we should especially note that for him the eternal God "cannot be directly thought of as from eternity related to a temporal

and creaturely reality unless this is itself eternal, as a correlate of the eternal God" (311). The Son receives his divinity in this act of self-distinction from the Father (310). Pannenberg then asks if this does not mean that the Father also distinguishes himself from the Son and is God in and through that self-distinction. He is aware that in traditional trinitarian thought the Father is without origin. But he recalls that already Athanasius had said the Father was not the Father without the Son.<sup>15</sup> Pannenberg recognizes that the Father is not begotten and that the relationship of begetting is irreversible. However, he suggests that the "relativity of fatherhood . . . might well involve a dependence of the Father on the Son and thus be the basis of true reciprocity in the Trinitarian relations" (312).

In working a second time with his method of seeking characterizations of the role or roles of divine Persons in the New Testament, Pannenberg complements the previous reflection with a consideration of the Son's self-distinguishing from the Father in terms of the Son's being himself plenipotentiary. He draws attention to a series of New Testament texts which affirm that God has given all power to the risen Christ (Matt. 28:18), indeed to the pre-Easter Jesus (John 5:23). Jesus is the holder of lordship (Phil. 2:9ff, Heb. 2:8). He must reign till all enemies are overcome (1 Cor. 15:24–25) (312–14).

Pannenberg moves from this witnessing to the power of Jesus on to a reflection on the implications of that power for a further understanding of divine lordship. He says the handing over of rule to the Son and its being returned to the Father are, as such, part of the sending of the Son. But by inference from the mutual relations of the historical person of the Son and the Father, we see that handing over and handing back of rule are the fulfillment of that sending, thus defining "intratrinitarian relations between the two." The Son exercises his lordship in proclaiming the lordship of the Father, an exercise consummated when all is handed over to the Father. Here Pannenberg sees a mutual relationship between Father and Son which, as he mentions, is not indicated by the notion of begetting. The Father begets the Son and hands over lordship to the Son, "so that his kingdom and his own deity are now dependent upon the Son." For in God rule is not to be distinguished from being. God need not create but if God creates a world, his lordship and consequently his own deity cannot be separated from rule over that world. Indeed, already in the eternal God the Son "freely subjects himself to the lordship of the Father." And the Father "hands over his lordship to the Son" (313), establishing a reciprocity of relationship between Father and Son. Pannenberg then briefly takes

up the question of the relevance of the cross of Jesus. He objects to the rather more direct discussion of the death of God, a discussion taking place at least since the time of Hegel. But he does see in the death of Jesus the "ultimate consequence of his self-distinction from the Father and precisely in so doing showed himself to be the Son of the Father" (314). The death of Jesus challenges the deity not only of Jesus but also that of the Father.<sup>16</sup>

For a third time Pannenberg again follows, in a general way, his method of moving from New Testament textual witness to further reflection on the implications of that witness (314–19). But here more than in the previous two exercises of that method he tends to interweave reference to New Testament texts with further reflection. In this third exercise, he turns to the question of the relationships between the Spirit, on the one hand, and the Father and Son, on the other. He remarks that the death of Jesus Christ not only raises doubts about the deity of Father and Son but also has implications for the Spirit who as life-giver raises Jesus (314). Among various citations, Pannenberg draws attention to the pre-Pauline formula that the resurrection is the work of the Spirit (Rom. 1:4, 1 Tim. 3:16b). Indeed, the resurrection of the dead is the work of the Spirit (Rom. 8:11). Pannenberg works especially with John, who speaks of the Spirit as another advocate to be sent by the Father (John 14:16). Though the Father acts through the Spirit, it is primarily the Spirit who raises Jesus from the dead. While the resurrection is also an act of the Son, it is by the power of the Spirit that he is raised. The Spirit's role in the resurrection of Jesus is decisive, although all three Persons are at work. The Spirit is "the creative origin of all life. To that extent we may say that here the Father and the Son are referred to the working of the Spirit." Pannenberg complements this consideration with considerable further reference to John who, for example, stresses the Spirit's glorifying the Son (John 16:14) who in turn glorifies the Father (John 17:4). And Jesus prays that the Father will glorify Him. In response, the Father sends the Spirit, who "manifests Jesus as the Son" and glorifies Son and Father in their permanent fellowship. The Spirit's glorifying not himself but the Son and the Father is a form of "self-distinction which constitutes the Spirit a separate person from the Father and the Son and relates him to both." The Spirit does not refer to himself (John 16:13) but witnesses to Jesus (John 15:26) and recalls his teaching (John 14:26). The Spirit then is the Spirit of both Father and Son (315).

Pannenberg does not accept the notion that the Spirit is the "we" of Father and Son, for this would not acknowledge the proper personhood of the Spirit. He does, though, appreciate Augustine's thought that the Spirit

is the love uniting Father and Son. Augustine's idea of the Spirit as the bond of union between Father and Son helps bring out the New Testament affirmation that the Son's relationship to the Father is rooted in the Son's reception of the Spirit at baptism, in the overall working of the Spirit (Rom. 1:4), and even in Luke's attribution of Jesus' birth to conception through the Spirit (Luke 1:35). Pannenberg then brings together various New Testament themes to support his understanding of the Spirit as being part of the eternal fellowship of Father and Son "because he is the condition and medium of their fellowship" (316). Pannenberg takes the occasion to criticize the notion that the Spirit arises from Father and Son, an idea based in an understanding of the Spirit only in terms of a relationship of origin. All Scripture permits us to say is that the Spirit "proceeds from the Father and is received by the Son . . . [who] gives the Spirit to his people." Father and Son send the Spirit "to incorporate believers into his fellowship with the Father (John 16:7; cf. 14:16; 15:26)" (317). He closes this second subsection of the third part of chapter 5 with the reminder that reciprocity in relations among the divine Persons complements, qualifies, and in a sense replaces at least in its exclusivist formulation the more traditional approach to establishing the identity of the divine Persons only on the basis of relations of origin (319).

The title of Pannenberg's third subsection of the third part of chapter 5 is "Three Persons but Only One God" (319–27). Here he prolongs his reflection on what he now terms three separate centers of action (*selbständiges Aktzentrum*, 319), drawing out further implications concerning the question of divine unity. He reiterates that the relations constituting the three divine Persons in their mutual self-distinction are more than relations of origin. The various relations indicated in the New Testament are all constitutive of the divine Persons. He refers again to Athanasius as he says that the Persons are these relations which distinguish them and constitute them in communion. This brings Pannenberg to the question of whether we might "define the relational nexus of the perichoresis more accurately and also show how it relates to the unity of the divine life" (320–21), with each Person being distinct in that Person's own way.

Pannenberg continues to harken back to Athanasius as he explores ways to ground divine unity appropriately. In reacting against the Arians, Athanasius had affirmed the full deity of the Son, as Pannenberg phrases it: "The Father is not the Father without the Son . . . he does not have his Godhead without him" (322).<sup>17</sup> But, according to Pannenberg Athanasius did not pursue further the rootage of divine unity in the relations constituting



the Persons, which is the approach Pannenberg himself takes. Pannenberg does not, however, deny the monarchy of the Father, for he sees this monarchy as being fully established and consummated through the work of the Son and the Spirit (324–25).

With this presentation of the monarchy of the Father achieved through the Son and the Spirit Pannenberg moves to his fourth and final part of chapter 5, “The World as the History of God and the Unity of the Divine Essence” (327–36). Here he says that Barth had not successfully based Trinity on divine revelation in Christ. Rahner was more successful in that he identified the immanent Trinity with the economic Trinity specifically on the basis of the incarnation of the second Person of the Trinity. Though Rahner managed to link the incarnation with the whole history of salvation, Pannenberg proposes that Rahner’s thought be extended to include linking incarnation with creation so that it “is brought into the relations of the trinitarian persons and participates in them” (328). Though the Father remains transcendent, when he has freely acted in the world through Son and Spirit “he has made himself [and his deity] dependent upon the course of history” (329). The cross thus questions the deity of both Father and Son. Pannenberg then sees the history of the world as such tied in to the immanent Trinity in light of the handing over of the kingdom to the Son and its being handed back to the Father. And he agrees with Moltmann that the glorifying of Father and Son in history implies the glorification of Father and Son in the eternal Trinity as well.

Though Pannenberg himself disavows the descriptor “panentheistic” for his position, an argument could be made in its favor.<sup>18</sup> He rejects the notion that the Trinity’s reality develops through history to an eschatological consummation. Here he is harkening back to his way of thinking earlier on. According to that thinking, at the end of time we will see God was always fully God from the beginning and even before the foundation of the world, though presently we affirm this only in anticipation as rooted in the resurrection of Jesus. “The eschatological future of the consummation of history in the kingdom of God thus has a distinctive function in establishing belief in the trinitarian God if on the basis of this event a decision is made concerning the existence of God from eternity to eternity, i.e., before the foundation of the world” (331–32). For Pannenberg, detaching the Trinity from temporal change, as he puts it, results in a one-sided understanding of Trinity. There is a need to bring together eternal Trinity and the process of history, leading again to the need to rethink in a new way the unity of the three divine Persons. Simply seeing essence and revelation

working reciprocally, or appealing to the movement of *perichōrēsis* as basis for that unity, will not work. Moving from essence to a relation of origin, or neglecting the fact that *perichōrēsis* presupposes some more fundamental explanation of the unity of the persons (334) does not give us an adequate basis for affirming divine unity. The theme of unity of the divine essence will have to be treated on its own. Pannenberg recognizes the provisional nature of his own thought on Trinity, given his understanding of God in relation to history. His thought is provisional and more anticipatory, both more generally in that all is in a sense provisional until the consummation and more concretely in that he must examine the three divine centers of action through further theological reflection. He then points to their action in creation, Christology, soteriology, ecclesiology, and eschatology, which he treats in the rest of his *Systematic Theology*. He wants to work “on the basis of a differentiated concept of the unity of the divine essence” beyond, for example, the notion of the divine Persons as individuals in a species or genus, a view he attributes to Basil of Caesarea (336).<sup>19</sup> But for our purposes, as we round out somewhat our understanding of his position on divine unity we will have to limit ourselves to further, brief reference to his notions of infinity, field (*Feld*), and divine love.<sup>20</sup>

At various points in his *Systematic Theology* Pannenberg discusses at some length the history of the development of the notion of infinity and its understanding as the true infinite. We can though sense something of his idea of the true infinite by reviewing selected remarks in chapter 6, “The Unity and Attributes of the Divine Essence,” part 6, “The Infinity of God: His Holiness, Eternity, Omnipotence, and Omnipresence,” subsection a, “The Infinity and Holiness of God” (397–401). Here Pannenberg interweaves appreciative remarks concerning Hegel’s multiple understanding of the infinite with his own treatment of the biblical theme of God’s holiness. He acknowledges that the Bible does not speak of God in terms of infinity, though biblical descriptions imply this notion. So we need to refer to the Bible to elucidate it. He then describes the infinite as that which, generally considered, is seen as being over against the finite. But he immediately brings in Hegel’s more specific argument that the true infinite cannot be so conceived. In such a case the infinite would not itself be infinite but merely another something finite (397n126). Though he does not use Hegel’s terminology, he briefly speaks of what Hegel had called the abstract infinite, namely, the empty infinite standing over against the finite, and the bad infinite, the latter being infinite succession in which limit continually returns. However, Pannenberg proposes that the basic understanding of the infinite

distinct from anything finite or limited does permit linking it with holiness understood as "separateness from everything profane" (398, see 397–98). He then reviews earlier biblical texts which stress God's standing apart from the profane. He argues that this standing apart is in fact a way of protecting the profane from divine intrusion that would destroy the profane. In this regard he cites Exod. 19:12, for "contact with the holy brings death." Through Yahweh's election, Israel becomes a holy people, permitting the people to be protected by God's own holiness. In the New Testament, "Jesus has sanctified his own in the truth (John 17:17–19)" (398) and Paul calls the churches "saints." Pannenberg continues to review biblical texts as he reminds us that beyond judgment the holiness of God implies, and indeed offers, definitive salvation. In the post-exilic period this hope is available to all and then the sending of the Son is to bring the world into "the sphere of the divine holiness" (John 3:16) (399). The holiness of God standing over against the profane world, and embracing it, shows a structural affinity between God's biblical holiness and the true infinite (400).

Pannenberg again refers to Hegel: "The Infinite that is merely a negation of the finite is not yet truly seen as the Infinite (as Hegel showed), for it is defined by delimitation from something else, i.e., the finite." The holiness of God is truly infinite because it opposes the profane and enters into it, making it holy. This entrance of divine holiness into the world is mediated by the Son and is also the work of the Spirit. "We also see the structure of the true Infinite in the life of the Spirit. As the Spirit who is identical with the divine essence (John 4:24) he is opposed to the world (Isa. 31:3), but he is also at work in creation as the origin of all life." Pannenberg closes this brief reflection with a reminder that for him an abstract concept of the true Infinite does not exhaust the biblical notion of the holiness of God and the Spirit. For Pannenberg, God through the Spirit gives existence to the finite. Here one can sense a certain critique of Hegel's more abstractly formulated notion of the true infinite, though Pannenberg does see affinities, perhaps we could say structural affinities, between the infinite and God's holiness (400).

Pannenberg's reference to the Hegelian notion of the true infinite gives us some further idea of what he understands by divine unity, namely, a real inclusivity. Pannenberg works as well with the notion of field taken from modern physics. Concerning field, we can look at a brief but helpful reference, again in chapter 6, and this time in part 4, "God's Spirituality, Knowledge, and Will." Modern field theories do not require thinking about "field phenomena as bodily entities," so we can more easily speak of the

Spirit of God in terms of Michael Faraday's notion of a universal force field. For example, the field's autonomy does not require speaking of a subject as is needed when thinking of Spirit in terms of mind or *nous*. "The deity as field can find equal manifestation in all three persons" (383). Pannenberg identifies this divine life or field both with the loving fellowship of Father, Son, and Spirit and specifically with the Spirit who grounds and brings about that fellowship. In a more provisional statement, Pannenberg here proposes that the Holy Spirit is the third realization of this field but, for the moment, stresses more that "the living essence of God as Spirit has more the nature of a force field than a subject" (384).<sup>21</sup>

Finally, we turn now to part 7 of chapter 6, "The Love of God," and specifically to the first subsection, "a. Love and Trinity" (422–32). Here Pannenberg first reviews aspects of the biblical revelation (422–25). He says that John and Paul locate the basic meaning of Jesus' history in God's love for the world and for believers (422). Jesus regarded this love as the reason for which he was sent. Pannenberg recalls various parables which illustrate God's love for the lost and sees them as revealing the love of the Father for the lost. Early Christians saw this message as characterizing the work and mission of Jesus, giving meaning to His death. Pannenberg then refers briefly to Old Testament prophets who spoke of God's love for the elect, a shepherd seeking lost sheep. He notes that Jesus saw his own mission in terms of this prophetic vision. What is special about Jesus' self-understanding is the fact that he sees the lordship of God breaking in with him. Paul, in turn, sees Jesus as expressing not only the love of God expressed in the sending of the Son but also as the love of Christ himself as subject of that love alongside the Father. "One and the same event has two different subjects. Their fellowship finds expression in the unity of the event" (423). Then Pannenberg goes on to remark that the love of God fills us (Rom. 5:5) through the Spirit working in us (424). With Regin Prenter, he remarks that the New Testament speaks not of God as loving, that is, not as one subject, but as being love itself (1 John 4:8 and 4:16) and "calls love the unity of the divine being of Father, Son, and Spirit" (425).<sup>22</sup> Pannenberg in effect identifies three subjects of one divine love in the New Testament, setting the stage for his own constructive reflections concerning divine unity as the mutual love of Father, Son, and Spirit.

In the rest of the subsection "Love and Trinity" (425–32), Pannenberg presents what could practically be called a hymn to the Father as love, the Son as love, and the Spirit as love. They are three divine Persons, each a movement of love in a particular and distinct way in line with the relations

constituting them. He immediately underscores the fact that there is here no further subject or hypostasis beyond the three divine Persons. This is, in a way, the error he finds in the thought of Barth and Hegel in that they posit a single divine subject. For the divine Persons love one another not in the sense that they love themselves in the other. Rather, more generally speaking, love gives rise to the selfhood of a person. "Each receives his or her self afresh from the other, and since the self-giving is mutual there is no one-sided dependence in the sense of belonging to another" (426–27).

In speaking more directly of God again, Pannenberg appeals anew to 1 John 4:8 and 16 to say that love is the same as the divine essence. "God is Spirit" and "God is love" denote "the same unity of essence by which Father, Son, and Spirit are united in the fellowship of the one God" (427). But love is no separate subject beyond Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. "It is the eternal power and deity which lives in the Father, Son, and Spirit through their relations and which constitutes the unity of the one God in the communion of the three persons" (428).

Pannenberg continues in the rest of this subsection to bring out various aspects of the mutual relations constituting Father, Son, and Spirit insofar as these relations are ones of love as self-gift one to the other. For example, the Father gives all to the Son who receives all in loving obedience to the Father. The Spirit is self-gift to Father and Son as the one who glorifies them and, in so doing, constitutes them in divine fellowship. In comparing the divine Persons to human persons, Pannenberg says that the divine Persons are fully constituted by their specific mutual relations, "thus their existence as persons is coincident with the divine love" (431). He ends the section "Love and Trinity" by saying that "divine love constitutes the concrete unity of the divine life in the distinction of its personal manifestations and relations . . . and . . . consummates the monarchy of the Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit" (432).<sup>23</sup>

### Idealist Family Resemblances

Pannenberg has long been thought of as having maintained Hegel's notion of history as the history of God, transforming Hegel's final-causality-oriented notion of God, as movement of spirit, into an eschatological understanding of God. In this understanding God is the power of the future proleptically active in the present and especially in the resurrection of Jesus.<sup>24</sup> While this observation concerning the transformation proposedly made by Pannenberg

may well be true, he is not simply a Hegelian. Schelling as well had worked out an end-oriented and indeed future-oriented understanding of Trinity moving toward a renewal, in Schelling's case, of an initial unity of being lost with creation. And though Pannenberg clearly reflects the general Idealist thrust toward a culminating end, he interacts with many different theological, philosophical, anthropological, sociological, and scientific traditions regarding history and the wider question of Trinity. To some extent at least these traditions have themselves mediated various Idealist themes and approaches to Pannenberg and others of his generation. On the theological scene, for example, post-Idealist thinkers such as Dorner, Barth, and Rahner, themselves influenced by Idealist thought, have in turn had great influence on Pannenberg, who is deeply cognizant of such theological traditions.<sup>25</sup> For present purposes, however, it will be sufficient to acknowledge several comments regarding possible Idealist influence on Pannenberg's thought. Then we will focus at greater length on examples of what we could call family resemblances between Pannenberg's thought on Trinity and that of German Idealists, whether that Idealist thought may have influenced Pannenberg more directly or as mediated through others. We will note as well his profound knowledge of Idealist traditions, the noting of which facilitates and reinforces our recognition of these family resemblances.

Many of us admire Pannenberg's true theological virtuosity while admitting the need for a great deal more study of the relationships between the thought of Pannenberg and that of Hegel and especially Schelling. On reading his thought on Trinity we quickly come to recognize the great-great-grand paternity, so to speak, of Hegel and Schelling in Pannenberg's theology. By way of brief entry into this complex question of an Idealist intellectual paternity of so rich and creative a thinker as Pannenberg, especially with reference to Hegel, we should note, for example, that Iain Taylor<sup>26</sup> argues against stressing too much a Hegelian influence. Though Taylor himself refers little to Schelling, he notes Samuel M. Powell's Hegelian reading of Pannenberg in Powell's *The Trinity in German Thought*. He acknowledges Powell's insight into the Hegelian character of Pannenberg's understanding of person in terms of self-donation, and cites to this effect Pannenberg in *Jesus—God and Man*.<sup>27</sup> On the other hand, he rejects Powell's Hegelian interpretation of Pannenberg on the historicity of God's being.<sup>28</sup> Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen's brief remarks are also helpful: "While there is no reason to deny the importance of some ideas of Hegel to Pannenberg's systematic reflection—which he himself freely acknowledges—it is also a fact that he uses Hegelian resources critically and at times is critical of some ideas of Hegel."<sup>29</sup>

Again, Klaus Vechtel discusses the wider relationship between Pannenberg and quite a range of philosophers. In the first part of *Trinität und Zukunft*, entitled "Philosophie und Offenbarung," Vechtel frequently refers to Hegel and to Pannenberg's critique of Hegel.<sup>30</sup> In the second part, entitled "Trinität und Zukunft,"<sup>31</sup> he presents Pannenberg's trinitarian thought and refers, among philosophers, to Hegel but seemingly not to Schelling.<sup>32</sup> Here in this second part, one of Vechtel's major concerns is to underscore the fact that Pannenberg rejects Hegel's idea, as Pannenberg understands it, that God or the infinite needs finitude to develop into the fullness of Godself.<sup>33</sup> He notes that Pannenberg grounds this rejection in his own trinitarian thought.<sup>34</sup>

Following on these examples of references to several discussions of Pannenberg especially in relation to Hegel, we can now focus at greater length on several examples of family resemblances between Pannenberg's thought on Trinity and that of German Idealists. As we have seen, Pannenberg critiqued Barth for not really letting Scripture provide the content of his notion of revelation. In a way reminiscent of Schelling, Pannenberg himself works extensively with a wide variety of Scriptural witnesses as well as with various theological traditions to describe the mutual, interrelational activity of Father, Son, and Spirit. He refers to these three as centers of action whose distinctive features emerge more clearly in the world-historical move from creation to eschatological consummation. His proposal to follow the development of Father, Son, and Spirit in their relationships with one another and with creation recalls Schelling's way of conceiving the three divine potencies on their way to personhood, as does his affirmation of divine unity fully established only at the eschaton. For Schelling, this is the reestablishment of full divine unity of being which had been lost at the moment of creation, a reestablishment rooted in the interpersonal relations among the three divine potencies become Persons. For Pannenberg this is the divine unity established through the mutual relations of love among Father, Son, and Spirit.<sup>35</sup>

In emphasizing the variety of ways in which the three divine Persons interact in divine revelation, Pannenberg takes an important step beyond what is for so many trinitarian thinkers the more traditional and accepted way of understanding the three Persons. That way of understanding involves speaking more or less exclusively in terms of relations of origin.<sup>36</sup> Without denying these relations, he goes on to explore the richness with which he sees Scripture describing mutual relations between each of the divine Persons and among them in their multiform interaction with one another (308–19).<sup>37</sup> But whereas Schelling spoke of shared divine being, Pannenberg speaks more

of shared kingdom and lordship. As we have seen, for Pannenberg the Father gives rise to the Son and yet is Father only in relation to the generation and sending of the Son. The Father depends on the Son to carry out the Father's reign. The Son both accepts lordship from the Father and submits himself to the Father's lordship. Each bears witness to the other.<sup>38</sup> And the Spirit not only comes from the Father but glorifies Father and Son and bears witness to the Father by bringing to fullness the Son's revelation of the Father. In and through his analysis of these and other mutual relations witnessed to in the Scriptures, Pannenberg identifies an interrelated movement among the three Persons which is formally but not materially common to them. Though each remains truly different one from the other, this formally common movement is one of self-constitution through self-gift one to the other and discovery, in love, of who one is in and through the other.<sup>39</sup> As we will recall, Pannenberg rejects the idea that "the one loves self in the other instead of loving the other as other" (426). Yet he has in fact transferred Hegel's overall idea of subjectivity as self-development through otherness from God as such, essentially a monosubjectively formulated development, to each of the three divine Persons in their mutual, intersubjectival action. Pannenberg speaks of person in three ways: as movement in which the self comes to its fuller self through the other; as movement of mutual self-distinguishing from others; as movement of self-gift to the other or others. Though with regard to Hegel it would generally be better to speak in terms of subjectivity rather than personhood, Pannenberg has in effect teased out these various meanings of person or subject, the first found more explicitly and the second and third perhaps more implicitly in Hegel's thought.<sup>40</sup>

With reference to Pannenberg on the notion of person, it will be helpful to recall more explicitly what he himself had written earlier on about Hegel and Hegel's notion of person in *Jesus—God and Man*, published in German already in 1964:

In his treatment of the doctrine of the Trinity in his *Philosophy of Religion*, Hegel was the first to so elaborate the concept of "person" in such a way that God's unity becomes understandable precisely from the reciprocity of the divine Persons. . . . He [God] shows himself to be such [personal] in his revelation as Father in relation to the Son, who as the Son of the Father belongs indissolubly to the divinity of God. . . . Father, Son, and Spirit confront one another as three distinguished subjects, three Persons. . . . Through this profound thought that the



essence of the person is to exist in self-dedication to another person, Hegel understood the unity in the Trinity as the unity of reciprocal self-dedication.<sup>41</sup>

In the full text, here cited only in part, Pannenberg had made several references to God as person and to God's personality, remarks which he would revise in his later trinitarian thought and which have not been included in this citation. This phrasing, including reference to God's personality, would rather be more reminiscent of aspects of Schelling's later thought. There Schelling strove to defend initial divine personhood and spoke of it as three potencies becoming tri-personal. Pannenberg then says: "With the exception of the problematic derivation of the Trinity from the concept of Spirit that Hegel shared with tradition, his idea is especially suited to the relation of Jesus to the Father and of the Father to him, as well as to that of the Spirit, who glorifies both, to the Father and the Son, as it is expressed in the New Testament."<sup>42</sup>

Already here in this earlier study Pannenberg indicates an affinity, dare we say a family resemblance, between, on the one hand, his understanding of Hegel on person and self-distinction and, on the other, what we have seen as his later working with the notion of three divine Persons. In this later work he speaks of the three divine Persons who, in their mutual relations, distinguish themselves from one another and, in that distinguishing as self-gift, provide the basis for divine unity in love. It may also well be, however, that Pannenberg attributes more to Hegel regarding the concrete working out of self-differentiation among the divine Persons than would be warranted. The concrete self-differentiation to which Pannenberg refers surely has greater affinity to the thought and approach of Schelling, especially in Pannenberg's heavy stress on difference and differentiation in the divine.<sup>43</sup>

In his mature systematic presentation, then, for Pannenberg the triune God is not one subject acting in three distinct ways. Rather, the triune God is three distinct divine subjects as centers of action moving, through the mutual relations and interaction that they are, to a final consummation at the end of time. In this final consummation Pannenberg insists on the continuing distinction among the three centers of action, thus recalling Dorner's insistence that the three divine modes of being remain distinct as Persons in the final divine unity. In fact, Schelling, Dorner, and Pannenberg all find it important, in working out their thought on Trinity, to emphasize this ongoing and finally perduring distinctness of the three.

Among other family resemblances between the trinitarian thought of Schelling and that of Pannenberg, we could briefly note that both stress

divine freedom, though Schelling does this more radically than Pannenberg.<sup>44</sup> For Schelling the Father will eventually become Lord while for Pannenberg the Father's lordship over creation will be established through the action of Son and Spirit. For Schelling and for Pannenberg the Father remains outside the temporal reality of creation. Schelling speaks of the Father giving up his divinity whereas Pannenberg speaks of the Father giving up his lordship. Schelling, as does Hegel though differently, identifies God's being with God's kingdom or lordship, and so does Pannenberg. Schelling speaks of our experiencing divine glorification in its fullness only at the end of time, though it has occurred already now in the Resurrection. Pannenberg points to the Resurrection as proleptic realization of the fullness of divine lordship to be established finally and fully along with divine unity only in the future. For Schelling the role of the Spirit is the glorification of Father and Son at the end of time, one of the roles Pannenberg as well attributes to the Spirit. Hegel, Schelling, and Pannenberg all attribute to the Spirit a more inclusive or including consummatory role.

As we have seen, in describing the consummation of world history and the activity of the three divine Persons in that history Pannenberg employs the scientific notion of a field.<sup>45</sup> He in fact proposes, more generally, to "conceive of the 'spiritual' nature of the one God in Father, Son, and Spirit in terms of a field of power rather than in terms of a single divine subject or person."<sup>46</sup> This field is God's essence as movement of interpersonal love occurring, and when referring to God in relation to the world Pannenberg would say acting, in, through and, more radically, as the divine Persons. It comes cumulatively, through and as the Holy Spirit, to full realization as the triune unity of love. This triune unity finally includes all that has occurred in history. So Pannenberg sees history as the history of God, who becomes what Hegel had called the true infinite. For Hegel this true infinite took the form of an inclusive movement of subjectivity: love on the level of religion and self-thinking thought in philosophy. For Schelling the infinite was an inclusive movement of three freely willing divine potencies become divine Persons through restoring and then sharing in the fullness of divine being. And now for Pannenberg the true infinite is a field constituted by the interpersonal love of the three divine Persons as movements of love. They are persons or subjects from eternity to eternity.<sup>47</sup>

We can further identify family resemblances by recalling again the general approach according to which Schelling, but especially Hegel, have each in his own way brought so many philosophical and theological notions together in one overall extended movement of subjectivity. Pannenberg joins

with others, including Barth, who have taken up this Idealist approach. Pannenberg does it, however, without tying it to a single movement of divine subjectivity. He brings together in one overall movement, even if worked out in terms of the mutual relations of three centers of activity, such notions as divine being, kingdom and lordship, revelation and history, creation and reconciliation, eschatology and Parousia or final consummation.<sup>48</sup> Underlying this general approach is the shift in emphasis, with the Idealists, from a so-called substance-based thinking to subject-based thinking. In the case of Pannenberg, this subject-based thinking takes the form of relation-based thinking. The divine Persons are understood as subjects constituted by their reciprocally self-distinguishing relations structured as movements of self-giving love. The divine Persons act in the world in line with these relations understood as expressions of divine love. This notion of subjectivity can be characterized in a certain general sense as one of intersubjectivity as long as intersubjectivity is not understood to mean relations between already existing subjects. It is this stress on subjectivity rather than substance which permits Pannenberg to establish divine unity on the basis of reciprocal self-distinction taking the form of love as self-gift to the other. With his multifaceted and diversely applied notion of divine love, Pannenberg has brought together, without reference to an underlying substance, notions of divine essence, existence, person, and unity while, as a further development of Rahner's rule, intimately linking immanent and economic Trinity.<sup>49</sup>

Pannenberg has, with major corrective moves, creatively interwoven various Idealist themes in such a way that it is often hard to identify more specifically whether the direct source of a specific insight or approach might be Hegel, Schelling, or Idealist patterns of thought more generally considered. Furthermore, in most cases he traces the various theological positions he embraces back to ideas he finds at least implied in Scriptural witnesses to the multiple roles of the three divine Persons and in further theological developments over the course of the history of Christian thought. At times he is in agreement with these developments, at others he offers corrective remarks, and sometimes distances himself from them. However, even in these various cases it would be difficult to see how he could have entered into such critical and constructive dialogue without having taken some inspiration, whether regarding overall approaches or concerning specific points, from post-Kantian German Idealist thought in its various forms. This is especially true with regard to the inference from New Testament descriptions of the roles of Father, Son, and Spirit to their reciprocally constituting self-distinguishing relations in the temporal sphere and, consequently, in eternity.

We can, at least indirectly, further ground and justify our more spontaneous, initial recognition of various family resemblances or intellectual kinship between Pannenberg's trinitarian thought and that especially of Hegel and Schelling by acknowledging Pannenberg's great familiarity with German Idealist thought. We can confirm Pannenberg's profound and even appreciative familiarity with Idealist trinitarian thought and Idealist thought in general by noting examples of remarks Pannenberg has made concerning Hegel and Schelling in some of his own writings and then by citing several attestations, coming from those who have known him or met him, to his profound knowledge of Idealist thought.

Early on Pannenberg had referred to Hegel and both the earlier and the later Schelling in his introduction to the volume he edited, *Revelation as History*.<sup>50</sup> That Pannenberg continued an intense interest in Hegel is witnessed to by the fact that he invited Ludger Oeing-Hanhoff to treat of the theme of the reception and critique of Hegel's trinitarian thought in a presentation to the Protestant Theological Faculty of the University of Munich in 1976.<sup>51</sup> Pannenberg's own in-depth understanding of Hegel is evident in his impressive 1970 study, "The Significance of Christianity in the Philosophy of Hegel."<sup>52</sup> We should note as well his later study, "La Doctrina de la Trinidad en Hegel y su recepción en la teología alemana."<sup>53</sup> In this article Pannenberg first provides a helpful overview of Hegel on Trinity and then reviews the history of Western trinitarian thought. He refers back briefly but of course insightfully to Augustine, Aquinas, and Spinoza, then forward from Hegel through Marheineke and especially Dorner to Barth, Rahner, Jüngel, and Moltmann. He stresses Dorner's mediation of Hegel to Barth, who then influences Rahner in his affirmation that the economic Trinity is the immanent Trinity and vice versa. Jüngel in turn links Barth's thought on Trinity and revelation more explicitly with the cross and Moltmann takes this linkage up in the form of a social model of the Trinity.<sup>54</sup> We, naturally enough, easily situate Pannenberg and his extraordinarily creative trinitarian thought in this lineage as well.

Along with these references to Pannenberg's study of Idealist thought and especially that of Hegel, we can cite enlightening personal anecdotes concerning Pannenberg and his great interest in Idealist thought. For example, Robert W. Jenson provides a particularly pertinent witness to Pannenberg's knowledge of and being at home in Idealist thought:

I began my study at Heidelberg just as Pannenberg was beginning his teaching. My first semester, he lectured on nineteenth-century

Protestant theology, which for most of the semester meant Fichte and Schelling and Schleiermacher and Hegel. . . . It was apparent that here was the lecturer's intellectual and even spiritual milieu; for all his sometimes pointed critique, he was at home with and indeed loved these thinkers. When he disagreed with any of them, it was in the way that they disagreed with each other.<sup>55</sup>

I myself also remember fondly the occasion on which, early in my research prior to writing a doctoral dissertation on Hegel on Trinity, I submitted to Prof. Dr. Pannenberg a series of questions written in my best German and also in English. Later, when he kindly received me in his office in Munich, he thanked me for sending the questions in both German and English because he was not sure he would have understood my written German. In any case, it was clear from our conversation that he had a deep and detailed understanding of Hegel. Still, Winfried Corduan<sup>56</sup> recounts that in discussion Pannenberg was uncomfortable with the idea of identifying a Hegelian rootage to his thought, referencing instead Duns Scotus. In this regard we can perhaps give Pannenberg almost the last word:

I . . . had to teach courses concerned with . . . modern history of Protestant theology. It was in this connection that I came to appreciate the importance of Hegel's thought in the development of modern theology, but mainly as a challenge to theology. I never became a Hegelian . . . Because my publications also gave evidence of this [his prolonged study of Hegel], the tenacious prejudice of my alleged Hegelianism developed, and it effectively concealed the more important philosophical roots of my thought.<sup>57</sup>

Unlike Hegel, Pannenberg did indeed reject the direct linkage of the doctrine of God as spirit with the notion of *nous* or mind and consciousness. He opted instead for a more inclusive form of the notion of God as spirit. That more inclusive form was for him Trinity as consisting of three divine Persons who were reciprocally self-distinguishing centers of action.<sup>58</sup> We might, however, be permitted to think that his prolonged study of Hegel left him with a seemingly rather spontaneous reflex to work with more formally speaking Hegelian approaches and dynamics as he developed his doctrine of God. And with his emphasis on love as self-gift, Pannenberg was able to present the three self-distinguishing divine centers of action as actively present, directly for Son and Spirit and more indirectly for the Father through Son and Spirit, in the world and moving toward the final establishment of

the monarchy of the Father. Though I would say his idea of three divine Persons interacting in creation and history recalls Schelling's approach, his emphasis on love as self-gift permitted him to speak of this movement without making an explicit, more Schellingian reference to divine Persons as the realization of divine potencies.<sup>59</sup> Pannenberg's trinitarian thought shows, in many ways, family resemblances with that of Hegel and Schelling as well as with that of Barth and Rahner—quite an intellectual lineage.



Barth, Rahner, and Pannenberg—three who in their trinitarian thought give clear witness to post-Kantian Idealist influence in Germany over the course of the twentieth century. Each one of them, but especially Pannenberg with his profound knowledge of Idealist trinitarian thought, witnesses to both Hegelian and Schellingian influences. Barth, Rahner, and Pannenberg exemplify, and have thereby given more specific content to, what we have spoken of as family resemblances among themselves and, especially important here, between their thought and that of post-Kantian German Idealists. Generally speaking, Barth and Rahner lean more toward the Hegelian, essentially monosubjectival approach to understanding Trinity. In his intersubjectival approach Pannenberg tends more toward, and perhaps moves beyond, the Schellingian approach to Trinity, which latter is itself in a way already intersubjectival. It has often been said that Western trinitarian thought stressed more the oneness of God whereas Eastern trinitarian thought emphasized more the threeness in God.<sup>60</sup> Hegel, Barth, and Rahner have, each in his own way, continued this Western stress on oneness. But now especially Schelling and Pannenberg have, in ways often particular to each of them, led a move to bring into the very heart of Western trinitarian thinking a special stress on temporally and eternally parallel threeness. Western trinitarian thinking can never again be described so monolithically in terms of focus on oneness. In both cases, namely, whether one stresses oneness or threeness in thinking God as triune, post-Kantian German Idealism continues to influence such subsequent philosophical and theological reflection. It does this both on its own, namely, on the basis of the power of its insights as presented and, in more mediated fashion, through such nineteenth-century trinitarian thinkers as Marheineke, Dorner, and Solovyov. That influence continues, further mediated now, among others, through Barth, Rahner, and Pannenberg, who are themselves extraordinarily creative twentieth-century German theologians.<sup>61</sup>



PART 4

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AMERICAN IDEALIST ECHOES





## Introduction to Part 4

In nineteenth-century Europe, Marheineke, Dorner, and Solovyov gave explicit testimony to German post-Kantian Idealist influence on their own trinitarian thinking. In twentieth-century Germany, Barth, Rahner, and Pannenberg developed their trinitarian theologies in ways that reveal strong family resemblances between their own thinking and that of the post-Kantian German Idealists. In so doing they evidence their profound knowledge of Idealist approaches to Trinity. An ocean away from Germany and a century and a half after the German Idealists we might well think that any possible Idealist influence on twentieth- and twenty-first-century American trinitarian thinking would at best be quite diffuse and, in any case, difficult to discern. We might be tempted in this regard to recall the image of a rock thrown into a pond creating an expanding but ever wider and weaker circle of increasingly diffuse circular wavelets.

German Idealism does indeed continue to have a wider and now more diffuse intellectual influence in the United States where such influence is rooted in the long and varied contact of American thinkers with German Idealist thought.<sup>1</sup> This prolonged contact has permitted that thought to condition, both in mediated and more direct fashion, various American ways of thinking and of responding to problems. This influence often occurred in rather subtle fashion and usually goes unnoticed today. Yet it continues to contribute significantly to the overall American intellectual context. This ongoing, often more or less discrete, influence gives rise to a situation in which those working to think Trinity anew in effect take for granted and then work more easily with, while significantly modifying, typically Idealist ideas and approaches in general as well as Idealist ways of understanding and structuring the notion of Trinity in particular.

Since the mid-1800s or so, American contact with German Idealism has occurred in various ways. Without intending to provide a full review

of the complex history of this varied contact, we can briefly mention several such ways the citing of which will permit us to bring to the fore this more general and more diffuse background Idealist influence. Noting examples of direct as well as more mediated contact by American thinkers with German Idealism will also help us as we move on to the American scene. Bringing these examples to our attention will enable us to identify aspects of that influence which favor and facilitate incorporating elements of German Idealist trinitarian thinking into ways in which various American trinitarian thinkers have come to their own constructive views on Trinity. When something like this longer-term contact with Idealism is in the air, so to speak, trinitarian thinkers may easily, perhaps more spontaneously, embrace its insights and overall approaches. They may do this even if they are not themselves directly engaged in discussion with the German Idealists or perhaps do not give evidence of being clearly aware of such Idealist influence. By way of quick example, we might recall the Idealist stress on and dynamic, developmental understanding of subjectivity considered in a wide sense. This insight is taken more or less for granted in much contemporary American reflection.

Among the varied ways of contact through which German Idealist thinking has come to have an influence on the overall American intellectual context we can, first of all, recall the direct reading of Idealist works by nineteenth- and early twentieth-century American intellectuals. In particular we should note the work of the St. Louis Hegelians, who were actively engaged in philosophical reflection for several decades from about the middle of the nineteenth century on. They often focused their reflection on the thought of Hegel, considering it in relation to specific practical problems such as, for example, coming to terms with the American Civil War.<sup>2</sup> Especially in the second half of the nineteenth century, many Americans developed a considerable acquaintance with German Idealist thought during the course of their studies, often in Europe, before becoming university professors. These scholars in turn exposed their students and others on the American scene to such thought. They in effect left after them a generalized, residual background of Idealist thought influencing nineteenth- and even twentieth-century American thinking. This influence has of course been further reinforced by the work of nineteenth- and twentieth-century British Idealists who themselves further mediated German Idealist thought to American readers through their own creative reflection.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to recognizing this more general American interest in Idealist thought and its perduring impact on the context within which more

scholarly reflection was carried out, we should acknowledge the continuing influence of modern personalist thought in the United States. Though such thought tends to stress relationality, it would perhaps somewhat ironically seem to have reinforced, while qualifying and reshaping, already present American ideas of the rugged, autonomous individual. In this personalist thought person is, to put it without further nuance, the highest form of reality. Such an understanding of person, with its underpinning of relational thinking, pretty well pervades much reflection in America. Its origins, present forms, and currency can be traced back in part at least to the ways in which German Idealist thinkers structured their understanding of person in terms of a dynamically developing movement of subjectivity. This Idealist character of American personalist thought has been helpfully noted by Jan Olof Bengtsson: "American personalism began as a rather distinctly idealistic philosophy: the term 'personal idealism' was first used by the American George Holmes Howison, and subsequently by a number of British thinkers. The concept of idealistic personalism, however, can be said to be much older."<sup>4</sup> Indeed, he traces "the broad movement of personalism" back especially to Jacobi and Schelling,<sup>5</sup> while acknowledging aspects of Hegel's thought variously being accepted and rejected by personalist thinkers.<sup>6</sup>

We can illustrate further the continuing rather diffuse influence of German Idealism on American thinking in general. To do this it will be particularly helpful to recall that American philosophers have often commented on and proposed profound revisions of various notions of subjectivity, whether considered as such or as found in German Idealism. They have in turn even developed their own understandings of subjectivity. They did all of this while regularly enough reacting rather explicitly against Hegel's way of understanding the movement of inclusive subjectivity as a movement of conceptual or pure thought. But not all of them simply rejected Hegel's understanding and, by way of extension that of other Idealists, of subjectivity as being triadic in structure. It could indeed be argued that this threefold character of subjectivity so characteristic of post-Kantian German Idealists has influenced in various ways a range of American thinkers. Among American philosophers who creatively received, reworked, or even rejected Hegel's (and in certain cases Schelling's) thought on subjectivity<sup>7</sup> while working out their own positions, we can point, for example, to Charles Sanders Peirce, who developed his triadic theory of interpretation and sign, namely, a trinity of firstness, secondness, and thirdness.<sup>8</sup> Following after Pierce, Josiah Royce,<sup>9</sup> with his notions of the spiritual community and the Spirit as movement of interpretation, structured his understanding of experience as a

triadic process of interpretation involving three terms, namely, interpreter, interpreted, and interpretee. John Dewey,<sup>10</sup> in turn, wrote in *Experience and Nature* of gross or primary non-reflective experience, secondary reflective experience, and reflectively enriched consummatory experience. The influential American philosopher and former professor at Yale University, John E. Smith, once wrote, in discussing various theories of experience, "There is the theory developed by the American philosophers—Peirce, James and Dewey—influenced by some fundamental notions first set forth by Kant and Hegel."<sup>11</sup> I would suggest that Smith's own further developed understanding of experience as revelatory constitutive encounter and as funded result has itself also been so influenced.<sup>12</sup>

We have then cited, by way of example, the St. Louis Hegelians and other American intellectuals who worked with post-Kantian German Idealist thought in so many different ways. We have also noted the rise of personalist Idealism in the United States with its strong emphasis on the notion of person. And we have underscored several American philosophers' varied reworking of the overall Idealist notion of dynamically developing subjectivity or at least working out their own understandings of such subjectivity in parallel with that of the Idealists. These examples have helped to ground our reference to a certain rather more diffuse German Idealist influence continuing to contribute to the overall American intellectual context. It is within this context that we can more easily consider several examples of such Idealist influence on American trinitarian thought. Despite strong reactions in various circles against German Idealism, it is as if its continuing influence in North America has created a certain openness on the part of various American trinitarian thinkers to Idealist thought. They themselves may not always have given evidence of being aware of their own openness to ideas, ways of proceeding, and overall thought patterns arising from and characteristic of post-Kantian German Idealism.

We have tried to sharpen our awareness of the German-Idealism-influenced overall intellectual context within which this trinitarian thinking takes place. Now, in addition we also need to find a fluid and flexible way of identifying more explicitly the influence of the German Idealists on trinitarian thinking in the United States. I would propose that such a way is to employ the notion of "echo" to refer to identifiable results of post-Kantian German Idealist influence on at least certain instances of American trinitarian thinking. Of course this idea of working with the notion of echo limps to some extent since, in using it, we can easily give the impression we are talking of simply echoing what another has said. And this would

of course not be a fair way in which to characterize the insightful and creative trinitarian thinking of those to whom we will refer. But perhaps taking a brief further look at the notion of echo can help us see ways in which we can use this notion to point to instances of Idealist influence on American trinitarian thinking. It is true that, in the world of sound, echoes presuppose and reflect a sound occurring prior to their own sounding. An echo is an echo of something. Still, in such repeating, echoes are surely also conditioned in their quality and tonal coloring by that which serves as the surface giving rise to the echo. For example, a sound reverberating off a softer surface of high rolling hills will have a different and more diffuse quality than one bouncing off harder-surfaced granite mountains.

It is evident that, in echoing the thought of others, creative thinkers at least in some sense presuppose that thought. But such thinkers do not simply repeat what they have heard or read or in some way presupposed. Their receiving, whether more directly or in more diffuse fashion, and working with the thought of others is conditioned by who they themselves are as well as by their interests and concerns, education, experience, personal history, and community or communities in which they live and work. Their thought is colored by the overall social, political, religious, and cultural milieu within which they find themselves.

More specifically concerning American trinitarian thinkers, it is surely true and no surprise that many of them are so conditioned.<sup>13</sup> In echoing various Idealist insights and ways of thinking about Trinity, they too creatively develop those insights in ways affected by the social, political, religious, and cultural milieu in which they work. Issues with which they struggle will have surfaced out of that milieu, which is often quite concrete and problem-oriented.<sup>14</sup>

We want then to catch echoes of Idealist trinitarian thinking as we hear them sounding in the ways in which various American trinitarian thinkers develop their understandings of Trinity. To do this we will need, as mentioned, to be sensitive to the rather more diffuse Idealist influence on the overall intellectual context within which American trinitarian thinking occurs. Acknowledging this more diffuse influence should make it easier for us in turn to be sensitive to and recognize more specific Idealist echoes. We will as well need to carry over with us from part 1 our insight into the ways in which Idealists have pursued their trinitarian adventures, an obvious fundamental condition for identifying echoes of those Idealist approaches to Trinity in American trinitarian thinking. We will also want to bring with us the insights, gained in previous chapters, into ways in which we can

identify and interpret appropriately what our selected American trinitarian thinkers will be saying.

It will be especially helpful to recall more explicit references made by American trinitarian thinkers to Europeans who have themselves been influenced by Idealist thought as we work to identify, and then further justify our recognition of, echoes of Idealist thinking in American trinitarian thought.<sup>15</sup> Several American trinitarian thinkers will go a step further in that they will dialogue and interact more directly and explicitly with Hegel's and, more to be referred to later on, Schelling's thought. A number of them have worked as well with such Idealist-influenced thinkers as Barth, Rahner, Pannenberg, and their predecessors. Indeed, some have either studied with the just-mentioned German thinkers and others like them or at least worked at the doctoral level on their thought. As examples of such witnesses to the influence of post-Kantian German Idealists on American trinitarian thought and to their trinitarian legacy, we turn to Robert W. Jenson, Catherine Mowry LaCugna, and Joseph A. Bracken, closing this part 4 with reference to my own reflections on Trinity.

## Robert W. Jenson

### *A Narrative Trinity*

Robert W. Jenson (1930– ) has been considered perhaps the “most significant Trinitarian theologian in the United States.”<sup>1</sup> He is an ordained Lutheran who has dedicated much of his energy to ecumenical endeavors. In “A Theological Autobiography, to Date,” he reports that, while teaching for several years as resident Lutheran in the Oxford University system, he found himself “cast as a one-man ecumenical movement.”<sup>2</sup> He participated in the first round of U.S. Episcopal/Lutheran dialogue and then in Catholic/Lutheran discussions, notably, the third round of the international dialogue on justification and ecclesiology. In what is typical of his own occasionally wry but always extraordinarily attractive way of writing, he says “a closed Lutheran caucus demanded and got my removal from the drafting committee, as being too friendly with the opposition.”<sup>3</sup> Later in life he compared himself with another colleague who was “decidedly Reformed, a liberal, and a drinker of Scotch,” while he was “a catholicizing Lutheran/Episcopalian, who hung out with neocons, and sometimes had a martini.”<sup>4</sup>

Jenson recounts that during the course of his studies he delved deeply into Latin and Greek literature. Over the years he read a great deal of philosophy and theology and has mentioned explicitly his study of the thought of such philosophers as Kant and Kierkegaard, Schelling, Hegel, and Heidegger as well as that of a whole host of theologians from Gregory of Nyssa to Augustine and Aquinas, Jonathan Edwards to Bultmann and beyond. He did his doctoral studies in Heidelberg and Basel, participating in seminars offered by such renowned theologians as Wolfhart Pannenberg, then a *Privatdocent*,



and Karl Barth. Peter Brunner served as his *Doctor-Vater*, proposing a dissertation on Barth's doctrine of the election of Christ. He accepted the proposal and happily notes that Barth read and approved the work.<sup>5</sup> Carl E. Braaten, his close associate, goes so far as to say that Jenson "has . . . always been a Barthian with a sharp Lutheran cutting edge, but increasingly less so the more he has engaged the thought of Catholic . . . and Orthodox . . . theologians."<sup>6</sup> So many years after Jenson wrote his Heidelberg dissertation and after he had published two books and several other studies on Trinity, in 2000 Pannenberg reviewed Jenson's two-volume *Systematic Theology*, volume 1 being entitled *The Triune God*. He opened the review with the following evaluation of Jenson's overall work: "His [Jenson's] books on the concept of God, on eschatological theology, on the Trinity, and on ecumenism have established him as one of the most original and knowledgeable theologians of our time. Jenson is a distinctively American voice in the worldwide endeavor to retrieve and reformulate a Trinitarian theology."<sup>7</sup>

As we listen to Jenson's trinitarian narrative, we can note from the very beginning that he in effect no longer works with an understanding of Trinity structured, as Hegel did, according to the logic of the concept but with one reflecting the logic of time. He replaces Hegel's conceptual plot with a narrative plot, ultimately describing the Trinity as true temporal infinite with the three divine Identities, his way of referring to the divine persons, interacting along more Schellingian lines.

## Jenson on Trinity

Jenson has published two books on Trinity, *The Triune Identity: God according to the Gospel*,<sup>8</sup> and *The Triune God*,<sup>9</sup> which is volume 1 of his two-volume *Systematic Theology*, plus several other studies on Trinity.<sup>10</sup> Given our present interests in the possible influence of post-Kantian German Idealism on Jenson's trinitarian thought, we will focus rather more selectively on elements of his trinitarian thought as they appear in his earlier, 1982 study, *Triune Identity*. This work has been referred to as programmatic.<sup>11</sup> It shares many of the characteristics of a first study on a subject of strong interest to the author. It is an impassioned, rapidly moving narrative written in refreshingly direct and succinct phrasing. We will try to capture its flavor by peppering our review with characteristic words and short phrases taken from the author himself. In order to lighten the text, many of these will be used

without quotation marks or simply with close paraphrasing. If the word or short phrase is particularly felicitous or attractive, it is probably Jensonian.

The sound of Idealist echoes is conditioned by the medium contributing to their re-sounding. In reading *Triune Identity* we sense the presence of the author himself arguing his position on each page. Jenson's concern here in this, a first work, seems not so much to dot theological "i's" or cross philosophical "t's." He does refer to various patristic and medieval authors to anchor his thought in a critically retrieved and at times corrected tradition. Often, it would seem that such references serve as occasions for him to bring forth his own innovative proposals. But he does not go to great lengths, as he will appropriately do in his more systematically developed second book on Trinity, to document larger numbers of patristic and medieval references. Such documentation allows him to root his thought more securely, or at least more explicitly, in what has already been said before and to correct what are from his point of view possible errors and lost opportunities in that earlier thought. But in *Triune Identity* his intention seems to be to sketch out in rather straightforward, we might say less encumbered, fashion his understanding of the dynamic narrative of the triune God. Here he lays out quite overtly his overall approach and the rich insights constituting the core of his trinitarian thinking. We can then expect that *Triune Identity* will be of particular interest. Its rather impassioned and straightforward, dynamic presentation will more directly reveal the overall dynamic structure and movement of his understanding of the triune God than does his later, more heavily nuanced study, *Triune God*. *Triune Identity's* rather direct presentation should make it easier for us to identify possible resemblances between his trinitarian thought and that of other trinitarian thinkers who themselves have been influenced by German Idealism. It should, more importantly for present purposes, help us to note possible resemblances between his trinitarian thought and that of the German Idealists themselves, indeed echoes of the latter.

Already in the preface to *Triune Identity* Jenson argues that God's identity takes on great importance in a religiously pluralistic age (ix). He announces that the triune proper name of the Christian God is "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" (x). He notes that to avoid naming God amounts to providing a religiously vacuous response to the question of who God is. He acknowledges that he has two aims which are inseparable, namely, clarifying the trinitarian tradition and further developing it (xii). After acknowledging that his reading of the tradition is not systematically neutral, he provides

a brief overview of the book's various chapters. In the first chapter he will present the bases for his insisting that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and its variants function as the proper name of the Christian God. Then in the second chapter he will analyze, to use his own carefully chosen words, "the tradition's first-level trinitarianism, the trinitarianism of speech habits and liturgies and immediate interpretation of experience, as embodying a primal Christian logic and rhetoric." In the third, fourth, and fifth chapters he carries out his dialectical analysis of the Christian identification of God, constantly working with the notion of identity to, as he says, understand, reform, and extend the tradition. He foresees future discussion of his proposals as he writes that, in his view, what he does with regard to the tradition is fair but untraditional (xiii).

We begin our recounting of selected aspects of Jenson's story of the Trinity with chapter 1, entitled "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit," where Jenson takes up, in five considerations presented in five sections of the chapter, his point previously stated in the preface that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is the proper name of the Christian God (x). In the first of these considerations, "The Sense of 'God'" (1–5), he is in fact introducing several basic notions which will inform his further discussion throughout the rest of the book. In this first consideration, he sketches out in preliminary analysis ways in which the word "God" is used. Here the basic notion of most interest to us at this point is that of time as the horizon of life and the no-more, still, and not-yet of all we know and will. Human life takes on meaning in as past and future are brought together so that "our lives somehow cohere to make a story." This coherence he calls eternity, and says that we usually refer to this eternity as God (1–2). Jenson notes that there are two great ways of understanding this eternity, namely, escaping from time as in, for example, referring to Brahman-Atman or embracing time as is done in referring to Yahweh. With regard to Yahweh or indeed other proper names, we work with a name that is proper in as it brings with it identifying descriptions signaling one individual identity (3).

Jenson continues with several additional remarks. For him, in the long run religion involves either fleeing from time or embracing it. We can understand eternity as union of past and future in two further ways, namely, a beginning which continues or an end that is anticipated (4). And we name the union between memory and expectation God. We speak to God as we try to discern who he is and "how our lives hang together. Trinitarian discourse is Christianity's answer to this need" (5).

After his preliminary analysis of time, life, eternity, and the various ways in which it can be understood as well as the notion of identifying individuation, now in a second consideration (5–7) Jenson points in an initial way to “Israel’s Identification of God,” which is the title of this second section of chapter 1. For Jenson, though the original meaning of the proper name of Israel’s God, Yahweh, has been lost, that has no particular theological significance. Yahweh has provided his name in Exod. 3:14, “I am who am,” and insists in the Ten Commandments that his name be respected (Exod. 20:7). Jenson identifies various descriptions accompanying the name. Among them there is most fundamentally the idea that Yahweh is the one who led Israel out of Egypt (Exod. 20:2; Deut. 26:5–9). Name and narration go together to identify ever more exactly who Yahweh is, even though the name was no longer spoken (7). The daily use of the name was effectively replaced by *Adonai*, Lord, translated *Kyrios*.

Jenson continues his initial presentation of the name of the Christian God in the third section, entitled “Identifying God in the New Testament” (7–10). The message of the New Testament is that Yahweh, the one who brought Israel out of Egypt, is given further identifying description as the one who raised Jesus from the dead. In the New Testament another proper name comes into use. All is now done in the name of Jesus: exorcisms, healing, church discipline, forgiveness, prayer. The church’s mission is described as preaching in the name of Jesus (Luke 24:47; Acts 4:17–18; 8:12; 9:15). And another new name appears in the New Testament: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (9).

At the beginning of the fourth section, “The Triune Name” (10–16), Jenson affirms that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is to the church what Yahweh was to Israel. He documents this in various ways through careful reference to the formulas used in early Christian liturgical forms and rites, noting that these trinitarian formulas are quite pervasive in the church and do not presuppose a prior theological development. This use “appears to have been an immediate reflex of believers’ experience of God” (10). Jenson recalls in particular the trinitarian naming-formula at the end of 2 Cor. 13:14 and the Matthean commission, in Matt. 28:19, to baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. He sees this triune name, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as being rooted in Jesus’ calling God *Abba*, Father, with Jesus himself then Son, and Spirit as indicating what comes of a meeting between the two (13). Father, Son, and Holy Spirit summarizes the event that Jesus is. At this point Jenson makes his

by now famous argument against attempts to replace the name Father with another word or expression. Father is, for Jenson, a proper name and, so, irreplaceable. Its use is analogous, beyond the gender differentiation characteristic of humans as male and female, the latter of which he considers ontologically superior (14).

The fifth and last section, "The Name as Doctrine" (16–18), moves the story along from what Jenson calls the historically conditioned character of early ecclesial discourse to the authoritative character of this fact in light of the Matthean baptismal formula (16). He notes the extension of this triune name from baptism on through liturgical celebration and the Christian life of prayer more generally considered. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is a proper name indicating, within the phrase, the Father of the next-named Son, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit who is the spirit of Jesus and his Father. This phrase gives expression to "the primal Christian interpretation of God" (18).

Chapter 1 served as a sort of brief rehearsal, or perhaps overture if we were to use a musical reference, of certain themes of the trinitarian narrative. In chapter 2, "The Trinitarian Logic and Experience," Jenson begins to recount in greater detail the story of the Trinity at what he calls a second level of trinitarianism (18). By second level he means an analysis of what he had previously referred to as a first level trinitarianism (xiii). Here in chapter 2 he proceeds in six steps: analyzing trinitarian logic; indicating its soteriological necessity; speaking of trinitarian life; identifying the roots of trinitarianism in the Hebrew Scriptures; then referring again to what he has termed primary trinitarianism; and, closing with a brief reflection on what he calls the three-article creeds.

In the first step (21–25), Jenson draws up what he calls "The Trinitarian Logic." His language is particularly elegant at this point and quite succinct. For him Father, Son, and Holy Spirit express the content and logic of God's identity arising out of "the church's primal experience of God." He works out this trinitarian logic by unpacking the Gospel identification of God as the one who raised Jesus from the dead. He immediately appeals to the temporality indicated in this phrase, captured already by the very earliest liturgy: "God is here identified by a narrative that uses the tense-structure of ordinary language" (21). We have here a story rooted in the existence of an historical individual whose identity is established in narrative fashion. Identifying God requires identifying Jesus. Jenson then presents Jesus as the lover who gives himself fully for others. "The plot of his life is an unconditional love" (22). This individual, the risen one, now loves with death already behind him. His love embraces all and his self-definition defines

the ultimate human goal of communion. The risen Jesus is God, with God understood as “some sort of eternity, some sort of embrace around time.” Jenson then says we can now identify God a second time as what will result out of Jesus and our being together (23). This is the Spirit, the power of the future.

So, with Jenson the trinitarian logic bears a threefold, temporal structure. To identify God in line with the Gospel we must use temporal arrows to refer to God: “To the Father as Given, to the Lord Jesus as the present Possibility of God’s reality for us, to the Spirit as the Outcome of Jesus’ work” (24). For Jenson, then, the trinitarian logic to which he refers is in effect the mutually interacting temporal structure of Father as past, Son as present, and Spirit as future.

In the second step (25–28) in the argument of this second chapter, Jenson briefly makes this logical point again, this time in soteriological terms. That is, he argues, with Gregory of Nyssa but especially Martin Luther, that we cannot go beyond the temporally presented God in Jesus who is the unconditional promise of salvation. There is no going behind Jesus to some a-temporal God. Rather, God’s hiddenness is his hiddenness under weakness and forgiveness and death, what Jenson calls the hiddenness of love (28).

In a third step (28–33), Jenson speaks of trinitarian life, namely, the trinitarian logic underlying the church’s historical existence (28) which we see exemplified in the Church’s mission and the Lord’s Supper. This mission is rooted in Jesus’ sending disciples to announce the Kingdom and in Jewish looking forward to universal salvation (29). After a review of several scriptural texts, Jenson concludes that “the Christian missionary lives in the trinitarian time-pattern. Blown onward by the Spirit, he serves the Lord to carry out the promises of the Father.” Jenson then refers to the Eucharist, so central to Church life (31). He reviews the Lord’s Supper as an act in remembrance of Jesus, a celebration which bears the temporal structure of Jewish prayer. The congregation shares in God’s triune life by giving thanks to God as source of all good, namely, Christ, and the good that will come, now awaited (Jenson says anticipated) in the Spirit (33).

Many, perhaps most, today would hold that a trinitarian understanding of God first comes into view in the Christian New Testament. But the fourth step (33–40) in Jenson’s argument here in chapter 2 takes the form of a re-reading of the Hebrew Scriptures to identify them as what he calls “the Root of Trinitarianism” (33). Here Jenson returns in a longer presentation to what he discussed earlier, in chapter 1, concerning the name

of God in the Hebrew Scriptures. He proposes that speaking of Jesus as God would not raise problems, given the way the Hebrew Scriptures and the earliest church think of God. Jenson summarizes what he is going to say regarding the Hebrew Scriptures as the root of trinitarianism when he mentions that the immediate trinitarianism characteristic of the early church involved no serious confrontation with Hellenic theology nor even a tension between trinitarian and Jewish thought on God. "This immediate trinitarianism was . . . the only possible *fulfillment* of the Hebrew Scriptures" (34).

Jenson sketches out the characteristics of God the rescuer from Egypt. Yahweh does not defend the established order. Rather, he rescues from oppression, whether from without or from within Israel. Yahweh's will is really a will and not simply the expression of natural necessity. In distinguishing the creation of the world and that of Israel, the Hebrew Scriptures see patriarchal Israel as being brought into existence through the promise of a land (36), a creation by a word as promise kept. Yahweh refused images, namely, that over which we have some control. Yahweh acts from a future here seen through promise as freedom. Interpreting God in the Hebrew Scriptures displays "the key steps of the trinitarian logic" (38). Jenson then goes on to a similar analysis of prophetic traditions in the Hebrew Scriptures. Yahweh is eternal because he is faithful, a form of continuity Jenson calls personal. Yahweh's faithfulness to promises "transcends time, to be *eternal* . . . It is just this interpretation of God's eternity that we introduced as the logical necessity—given the resurrection—of trinitarian identification of God" (40).

In a fifth and penultimate step (40–48), Jenson again discusses what he calls primary trinitarianism, namely, the trinitarian identity of God found in the New Testament and on till about 150 AD and the beginning of the major confrontation with Hellenistic thinking on God. In relatively unself-conscious New Testament and early Christian thinking about God continuity with the Hebrew Scriptures made it easy to consider the Spirit's role as such, given the Pentecost experience. But the case of the relationship between God the Father and Jesus the Son is, as Jenson puts it, more complicated (40).

Though identifying God by historical events was characteristic of the way in which the Hebrew Scriptures understood who God was, Jenson admits that an event such as the resurrection of Jesus, indeed an individual's life, calls for language not in the Hebrew Scriptures but congruous with it (41). He then reviews such developments, to which we will refer in more summary fashion.

Jenson begins by pointing to a “semantic pattern in which the uses ‘God’ and ‘Jesus Christ’ are mutually determining” and are fundamental. He gives many examples, drawn primarily from the Pauline writings. He finds a primary example in Rom. 10:9: “If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” In this pattern we see expressed the early church’s experience of the relationship between Father and Son. Jenson goes on to review various Hebrew Scripture titles and images used eclectically by early Christianity to speak of the relationship between Father and Son. These titles and images refer as such not to Christ’s being but his function. But Jenson writes that we cannot avoid asking the question about the form of being implied by speaking of Jesus as Lord. This function did not raise this question for the primal church, and for that church this was not a defect. For Jenson, the resurrection forced the early church to find new language, which it did quite unselfconsciously (42). He cites various New Testament phrases that rather spontaneously reflect a trinitarian pattern. Among them, for example, Eph. 5:18–20: “But be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord . . . giving thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father.” And in the reverse order, Eph. 1:11–14, describing the work of salvation: “In him, according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things . . . , we who first hoped in Christ have been destined . . . to live for the praise of his glory. In him you also, who . . . have believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, which is the guarantee of our inheritance” (43).

Among Jenson’s many other New Testament references, we should note Jenson’s stress on the importance of Rom. 8:11, which reads: “If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit which dwells in you.” Again, for Jenson we see here the trinitarian logic: “The *Spirit* is ‘of him *who* raised *Jesus*’ ” (44).

Jenson then recalls the early postapostolic church’s efforts to speak both in trinitarian terms and about the Trinity (44–45). He refers to various function-images. He cites, for example, a name christology, a Torah christology, in Ignatius a *Logos* christology different from later trinitarian *Logos* speculation, and, most importantly, an effort to understand Son and Spirit as angels in ways the term is used in Hebrew Scriptures and related writings such as the *Ascension of Isaiah*. Jenson brings this fifth step in his reflection on the trinitarian logic and experience to a close with reference to



the use of various prepositions so important in later arguments concerning the equality and roles of the divine Persons in the trinitarian economy of salvation. He writes that "Christians bespeak God in a triune coordinate system; they speak *to* the Father, *with* the Son, *in* the Spirit, and only so bespeak *God*. Indeed, they live in a sort of temporal space defined by these coordinates, and just and only so live 'in God'" (47).

Chapter 2 closes with a rather brief, sixth step, "The Three-Article Creeds" (48–51), in which Jenson reminds us that the structures of language and experience he has just presented are proclaimed in Christian worship when and wherever the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds are recited (48). He refers to two forms of creedal formulations, namely, stories and summaries about Jesus and the command to baptize (48–49). The creeds arose out of these stories and summaries and this command. For Jenson they declare the trinitarian logic he has worked out in this chapter to be the "necessary logic of the gospel" (50). He ends this second chapter with the recognition that in these creeds the Father is addressed as God. But he insists the gospel-insight is that, while we address the Father as God, we do so in praying "*with* Jesus *in* their Spirit. The particular God of Scripture . . . envelops us" (51).

Jenson continues his trinitarian narrative in the following chapters, where he distinguishes between "the dogmatic statement of Christianity's trinitarian identification of God and dialectical analysis of this identification" (xiii). In these chapters he works with the concept of identity to, as he says, understand, reform, and extend the tradition. In chapter 3, entitled "Of One Being with the Father," he retells the story of Christianity's encounter with the Hellenic understanding of God. He talks of the gains made in this encounter, and especially of the overall incompatibility of that understanding of an immutable God with early Christianity's quite spontaneously formulated, historically based and temporally understood identification of the triune God. For present purposes, we will continue to follow the plot of his retelling in somewhat less detail. Now especially in chapters 3 and 4 we will spotlight moments where he brings to the fore aspects leading more directly to or expressing his own constructive proposals (xiii).

Jenson divides chapter 3, the third act so to speak, of his overall triune narrative, into four scenes. In the first of them, entitled "The Hellenic Interpretation of God" (57–61), he sets the stage for all four, noting he has a story to tell. He holds that the Gospel account of God came up against that of the Greeks, with which it was ultimately irreconcilable. But Christianity and trinitarian doctrine and analysis are the result (57). He sees Greek religion and reflection as arising out of classical Greece's violent

origins, in which tribes from the North overthrew the there-existing civilization. He points to five moves characteristic of Greek religion that set it up in an antagonistic relationship with Christianity. First of all, time must be overcome. The gods were immortal. Whereas “Yahweh was eternal by his faithfulness *through* time . . . the Greek gods’ eternity was their abstraction *from* time” (58). Second, there needed to be actors, humans and gods, to explain events and time. Third, the Ionian philosophers reduced all godly characteristics to immortality, resulting in “the divine” being understood as a unitary abstraction of the power and plurality of the gods. Fourth, since timeless reality is not experienced, there must be a quest for a timeless basis for that which is temporal (59). Fifth, this quest is in effect Greek religion and reflection. The quest involved applying predicates to God which negate the temporality of experienced reality. In an approach essentially analogical, the Greeks refer to God as, for example, impassible or indescribable. With us being in time and God not, there arose the need for divine and semi-divine mediators.

In chapter 3’s second scene, “The Initial Christianizing of Hellenism” (61–78), Jenson recounts the encounter of Christianity with Greek religion and philosophy, indeed a confrontation leading to what he calls, as the title indicates, the Christianizing of Hellenism (62). In the course of this review, he brings forth his own trinitarian insights as he embraces, critiques, reforms, or even rejects certain compromises he finds Christian thinkers made in their inculturating dialogue with the Greeks and the latter’s nontemporal understanding of the divine. Christians who worked with Greek thought were themselves members of the Greek world who had to come to terms with the presupposed distance of God. In this encounter, Christians tended to juxtapose or put alongside one another Greek nontemporal and biblical temporal descriptions of God (62). For example, Justin Martyr’s God was unoriginated, impassible, immaterial, and so forth, yet was likewise compassionate, one who acts in Jesus and both punishes and rewards (63). Jenson continues his narrative with special focus on what he calls the thread of our story, namely, modalism and subordinationism (64). He sees modalism as a way of understanding God above time, with Father, Son, and Spirit as distinctions indicating the roles of creating, redeeming, and sanctifying. Subordinationism at least was able to identify the Father with God himself (65), with Son and sometimes Spirit being at lower ranks in a vertical order between timeless God and temporal world. Over the course of his review of this earlier encounter of Christianity with Greek religious and philosophical thought, Jenson stresses again, and among many points

of great overall interest, that "the primal trinitarian naming and liturgical pattern make a temporal structure horizontal to time and inherently triple as time is" (68).

During the rest of this second scene, Jenson focuses on the trinitarian thought of Tertullian in the West and Origen in the East. In what would seem for many readers to be a somewhat surprising turn, he seems to find certain aspects of Tertullian's thought particularly congenial to his own approach. In this approach Jenson stresses the mutual distinction of the divine persons among themselves. Usually we have tended to identify the idea of mutual distinction more with an Eastern approach to Trinity. But Jenson recalls at some length Tertullian's many contributions to trinitarian theology, including of course the establishment of the terminology of three persons in one substance (*tres personae unius substantiae*) (71). He notes various insights of Tertullian's that were not further developed (74). Among strong points in Tertullian's trinitarian thought, he includes Tertullian's focus on the Trinity itself, a more biblical interpretation than that of those before him, especially the Apologists, and a greater role given to biblical characteristics of God. He sees Tertullian as working with a more Old Testament notion of *logos* as God's utterance when he translates *logos* as *sermo*. He notes that the creed established the structure of Tertullian's trinitarian thought. He credits Tertullian with adopting the notion of economy to express the uniqueness and self-consistency of God's *rule* in saving history (72). He refutes modalism through an appeal to the scripturally described relations among Father, Son, and Spirit, three proper names, and saying that the three in God form perfect community.

Jenson then turns briefly to Origen of Alexandria. He focuses on two points in Origen's thought, namely, his "hermeneutically self-conscious biblical exegesis" and his doing "all theology as meditation on and analysis of the reality of Christ" (74). For Origen God the Father is divinity in the Greek sense of being apart from the world, ontologically different, timeless. Origen, then, thinks in terms of mediation between the timeless Father and the temporal world. He works, Jenson says, with the notion of image or *eikon* as the chief way of mediating between time and eternity. As image of God, "the Son has his own Ground in the Father and is in turn the Ground of all other being" (75). God in knowing himself gives birth to the Son who is God's self-knowledge. The Spirit likewise is eternal as the source of sanctification. Thus Origen's famous division of labor, which we could almost describe in the following way though these are not Jenson's words: the Father gives being; the Son knowledge to those capable of it;

the Spirit holiness fulfilling such knowledge. For Jenson, in citing Origen *On First Principles* 1.3.5, Origen's system is "fully trinitarian in its own way," yet fully subordinationist. As image the Son is intermediate between Father and time-conditioned reality, true God for us but not for the Father.

The third scene is that of "The Arian Crisis" (78–84). Among the actors Jenson refers to in this dramatic crisis we can note in particular: Eusebius of Caesarea; Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria; Athanasius, Alexander's adviser and later his successor; and, Arius, a priest of an Alexandrian parish. For Jenson the basic question to which the Origenist system could not really respond was whether the *Logos* was Creator or creature. It was the Origenist study of Scripture which, with its radical distinction between Creator and creature, eventually forced this question (78).

According to Jenson's scenario, Eusebius led the Origenist left wing. He adopted completely the Greek view of God as beyond all categories, with the adjective "God" applied literally to the Father and less so to the Son. The true God, the Father, could not be involved in time. Jenson quotes Eusebius in *Demonstration of the Gospel* 5.11 as saying that "[the Son] is greater than any angelic nature, but less than the First Cause" (79). Athanasius reflected Origen's vision, having studied Eusebius. But for Athanasius the *Logos* is God without qualification and without subordination. He identifies God not by using ontological prerogatives such as unoriginated, but as the Father of our Lord (80). Given these two positions, there followed quite a struggle among clergy in Egypt. One of them, Arius, denied what Athanasius had affirmed, namely, the true divinity of the Son. In so doing he in effect struck at Alexander and was deposed by a synod.

Jenson takes up for discussion the role of Arius who, he says, held from the beginning that the Son cannot be coeternal with the Father unless the Son emerges "from *within* the Father's being or as a *parallel* unoriginated being." But for Arius deity is unoriginated and in effect internally undifferentiated (81). Again, Jenson notes, the underlying factor here is the Greek need to escape time. For Athanasius, on the other hand, God is intrinsically Father of the Son. And God cannot be Father without the Son. Indeed, God's being his Father is just what the Son reveals. With this relation within God, God does not need bridge-beings. Jenson says antiquity's religious need for mediation is not "filled by the gospel; it is abolished" (83). Then in about 360 AD, Gregory of Nazianzus brought together various anti-Arian arguments when he asked how the *Logos* can unite us to God by baptism if he is not worshipped. But if he is worshipped, he would seem to be God.<sup>12</sup> Athanasius had built his argument on the triune baptismal formula.

The fourth scene, *Nicene and Constantinople* (84–92), brings the third chapter to a close with a dramatic reading of the political, ecclesiastical, and theological struggles leading up to these two ecumenical councils. Of particular interest to us are Jenson's remarks here and there linked directly or more indirectly with the notion of deity in relation to time. In condemning Arius at the Nicene Council in 325, the Council insisted Christ is consubstantial with the Father, begotten not created (84). In this thus-expanded creed, the Nicene decree is "daily trinitarian liturgical naming of the gospel's God, and interpreting of three-arrowed time by his particular deity" (85). There is differentiation in a relational God. And Christ is constitutive of God. There is no need for "ascent to a timeless and therefor distant God." The Creed proclaims a God who "never has been timeless and distant from us" (87).

But then there arose the further dispute about the Spirit. Athanasius embraced and worked with the notion of *homoousios* to defend the idea that "the Son—and the Spirit—are [in Athanasius' words in *Discourse against the Arians I*, 9] 'proper to the Father's reality.'" So the differentiation of Father and Son is within God and constitutive of what God is (88). The Trinity as such is God. Origen's idea that there are three in God remains, but the three are now no longer ranked ontologically. In a brief preview of further analyses in the next chapter, Jenson provides a succinct summary of what the Cappadocians accomplished: "The Cappadocians took Origen's three hypostases and his real distinctions among them, in Origen a ladder reaching vertically from God to time, and tipped it on its side, to make a structure horizontal to time and reaching from point to point in God. Of what was for Origen the structure joining God and time, they made a structure of God's own reality" (90).

In chapters 1 through 3, Jenson has argued to the overall time-conditioned character of the Christian God. Now in chapter 4, "The One and the Three," and then in the fifth and final chapter, "Triune Infinity," he develops various elements of his own more specific narrative interpretation of the triune God as one of triune identity. Earlier on he had referred to these chapters 4 and 5, as well as chapter 3, as the place where "materially constructive proposals are thickest on the ground" (xiii).

Chapter 4 moves along in six sections, the first of which is entitled "The Cappadocian Language" (103–05). Here Jenson reviews linguistic and philosophical backgrounds to the words *ousia* and *hypostasis*. He noted that the latter stresses distinguishability and identifiability while the former

refers to what that distinguishable and identifiable one is (104–05). The Cappadocians sought to explain why there were three, but not three gods.

The second section, “*Hypostasis/Identity*” (105–11), is where Jenson addresses head-on his intention to work with identity rather than with *hypostasis* when he speaks of the triune God. He first of all describes the Cappadocian move as one in which the Cappadocians rework *hypostasis*. Though there can be no characteristics which render the Godhead plural, there is one which identifies the various *hypostases* without so rendering the Godhead, and this is the notion of relation. These are different ways of being one God. Going beyond the merely historical, Jenson then recalls that the *hypostases* are “Jesus and the transcendent Will he called ‘Father’ and the Spirit of their future for us.” What happens here happens in God. In Jenson’s reading, then, begetting, being begotten, and proceeding are biblical ways of speaking of the temporal structures of evangelical history (106). The three are God through the “temporal dynamic between Jesus and his Father and our Destiny” (107). It is at this point that Jenson proposes to replace the notion of *hypostasis* with that of identity, which would be the more modern way of saying what *hypostasis* in its separation from *ousia* had originally tried to say.

Jenson reinforces his argument in favor of identity by recalling three aspects of its use in modern parlance. Without intending to capture the detail of his presentation, we can simply note, first, that Jenson says we point out a “this” to indicate that about which we are speaking. We also use proper names and identifying descriptions. So, with regard to the Trinity there are three discrete sets of names and descriptions which give rise to three identities of the same reality. Thus, “God is good in the way that a giver is good, and he is good in the way that a gift is good, and he is good in the way that the outcome of a gift is good” (109). Second, we assert a certain continuity characteristic of a person. There is no simple ongoing identity in God but, rather, a plurality that has a structure of tenses. Third, we speak of identity to interpret personal existence, identity as something we seek. In the modern sense we are persons when we remember who we have been and hope for that which we will be. The Cappadocian reworking of *hypostasis* was an effort to give expression to “this sense for the peculiar identity of person-realities.” Jenson ends this section with remarks to which we will want to return when we consider possible Idealist influence on his trinitarian thought. In a way reminiscent of Barth, he says “that there are three identities in God means that this God’s deed of being the one God

is three times repeated, and so that each repetition is a being of God, and so that only in this precise self-repetition is God the particular God that he in fact is" (111).

Jenson opens the third section, "'Being' or 'Event'" (111–14), with a return to the Cappadocians. Here he refers to their notion of *ousia* as the being of "three individuals without these being three instances of God" (111). This brief, more general reference to the Cappadocians serves as a way into his own understanding of divine *ousia* as infinity. He says he will follow more especially the lead of Gregory of Nyssa, which he does in logical moves somewhat reminiscent of Gregory's own tight logical argumentation. He first makes two preliminary points and then turns directly to what he wants to say about *ousia* as infinity. In the first of these points he repeats, with Gregory, that the identifying description of God's one *ousia* is infinity, for God's being is infinite. Other descriptions, whether positive or negative, follow from infinity and cannot mark off deity, which is boundless. In a second point, Jenson says that Gregory recognizes the trinitarian compound of *three* names as the proper divine name (112). He then shifts to his main insight, namely, that God is "not predicated of the divine *ousia* at all, singly or trebly." Neither the *ousia* of God nor its instances are logical subjects of "God." In line with his reading of Gregory, Jenson asserts rather that God is predicated of God's activity toward us. Since for Jenson "all divine activity is the structuredly mutual work of Father, Son, and Spirit, the divine activity is but one logical subject of 'God'" (113). He concludes this section by indicating that that "there is one event, God, of three identities" (114).

In the longer, fourth section of chapter 4, "The Western Version" (114–31), Jenson, as indicated by the title, turns to the West. He notes four characteristics of the Western reception of the trinitarian thought that had been laboriously worked out in the East. That reception was characterized, first, by the fact that the West received the trinitarian doctrine as a finished product. Second, there was considerable terminological confusion in the West, with little understanding of Eastern subtleties. Third, the Western reception occurred concurrently with the collapse of paganism, with the result that there was no longer a need to identify the God of the Gospel over against other gods. Fourth, the Western synthesis was mainly the work of one man, Augustine (114–16).

Jenson then reflects at length on Augustine's understanding of Trinity in which, however, Augustine distinguished between God as triune and the history of salvation (116). Under Platonic influence, Augustine sets up the Western understanding of God's timelessness. When we think of creatures

we think of “was” and “will be,” but when we think of God these two cannot enter in. God is being itself with the destructive consequence, as Jenson phrases it, that God is simple. He emphasizes that this stress on divine simplicity was incompatible with Nicene trinitarianism (118). The three divine relations become irrelevant to the being of God, just the opposite of what Jenson saw the East as saying. To paraphrase Jenson closely, for the East the Trinity was called God because of the relations and differences and for Augustine the Trinity was so called in spite of them (119).

In his continuing narrative, Jenson follows the further development of Western trinitarianism with its arrival at the classical affirmation of two processions giving rise to four relations, namely, begetting, begotten, breathing, and breathed. He himself describes his reading of this development as alternating, in his own words, between lamentation and admiration of the virtues of its defects (130). In the course of this reading, to which we will refer quite selectively, he sketches a resulting divine movement from Unoriginated as such, with Father begetting the Son who is begotten and Father and Son breathing the Spirit—three divine relations/Persons established on the one-way basis of relations of origin. So, in citing Aquinas Jenson says divine person means a relation as a subsistent, though for the metaphysical tradition such a notion is sheer nonsense. Jenson is here pointing out that the biblical narrative reverses Greek metaphysical thinking. Relation is no longer a characteristic of something which already is but, to put it without nuance, that which makes something be what it is. And he tellingly remarks that “the general consequences of this reversal of interpretation have long appeared in Western philosophy, most explicitly in some aspects of German idealism, as Hegel’s definition of spirit as the relation between self and not-self, which just so is the being of the self” (123).

Much of the rest of this section takes the form of a critical reaction by Jenson to a great deal of the Western trinitarian thought set in motion by Augustine. He sees these Western developments, overall, as a reversion to pre-Nicene metaphysical attitudes toward the distinction and difference between timeless being and temporal being. He appreciates the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215’s decision siding with Peter Lombard. The Council said that the Father begets the Son “from his divine substance” rather than taking up the position of Joachim of Fiore that locates the source of the Son in “the divine substance of the Father” (124). Here and elsewhere in this section Jenson highlights and favors theological developments which stress distinctions among the divine Persons and the possibility of their mutual interaction. He sees this to some extent at least, for example, in Augustine’s



exploration of the dialectical complexity of the human soul in which "each factor is what it is only by and for the other factors." The soul loves itself with knowledge provided by memory and so seeks to know itself. Though this is not the route Jenson takes in his effort to develop a trinitarian theology, he stresses that personal being as ontological and God's being personal are deeply Christian notions (130–31).

The ever-further developed Western distinction between nontemporal begetting and breathing, namely, the divine processions constituting the immanent Trinity, on the one hand, and the temporal missions of Son and Spirit establishing the economic Trinity, on the other, is, for Jenson, a particularly disastrous trinitarian proposal. For such a distinction separates the understanding of the triune God from its moorings in salvation history. Jenson summarizes the problem as follows: "The three derive from God's reality in time, from time's past/present/future. But if the One is one precisely by abstraction from time, the one-and-three can never be made to work" (125–26). We end up with, for Jenson as indeed before him for Rahner, the infamous affirmation that the work of the Trinity outside itself is one. The consequence is that any Person of the Trinity, and not specifically the Son, could have been incarnate. There then arises the theory of appropriation, according to which various characteristics, attributes, and roles are applied to one or other of the divine Persons without these being really characteristic or constitutive of the identity of the divine Person to whom they are applied. We have again a return to a timeless deity. And, in Jesus' baptism the Father speaking could be any of the divine Persons or the Trinity as a whole.

Jenson takes the opportunity in the fifth section, "Vicissitudes of Western Trinitarianism" (131–38), to make several remarks of particular present interest as he recounts further theological and philosophical developments selected from the time of the Reformation on. In this section we should note especially his move in three chronologically sequent steps. He begins with initial remarks concerning the more or less disappearance of the doctrine of the Trinity. He then focuses on Schleiermacher and his brief reference to Trinity as well as Hegel, who proposed a philosophical reinvigoration of the doctrine. And he concludes with a consideration of Barth, who launched a theological retrieval of the doctrine.

In the first step, Jenson says that Western abstract trinitarianism had a regrettably negative impact even on trinitarian reference in liturgy, preaching, and personal piety (131). He speaks as well of benign neglect from within the Church, citing for example Melancthon, and from more or less

Pietist corners as well. He notes, of course, the various Unitarian movements as well as other directions of thought leading up to the Enlightenment with its rejection of trinitarianism.

Jenson then, in the second step, focuses on two figures who at the beginning of the nineteenth century attempted to overcome the Enlightenment, namely, Friedrich Schleiermacher and Georg W. F. Hegel, both of whom he considers important for current trinitarian thought (133). While Jenson's treatment of Schleiermacher as representing what many Protestants will have learned about the Trinity is of great interest, we will here concentrate in somewhat more detail on his remarks on Hegel's work on Trinity (134–36). We should note that Jenson provides only one note directly referencing Hegel, namely, his *Phenomenology* treatments of lordship and bondage and of the revealed religion as well as his *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* and, more specifically, the introduction, parts 1 and 3. He also refers to brief remarks he made on Hegel in his study, *God after God*.<sup>13</sup> Jenson writes as one who has plumbed the depths of Hegel's thought so well that he is able to present it in a more synthesizing but quite accurate reading.

According to Jenson, Hegel “deliberately set out to reinvigorate the inherited doctrine of the Trinity by releasing its metaphysically revolutionary implications.” He sees Hegel as centering his philosophy on the Augustinian-Western version of the trinitarian doctrine, picking up on Augustine's perception of God as personal, whose being is constituted by memory, knowledge, and freedom that unites them. Hegel ran with this notion of personal being, giving all reality the character of being personal. Jenson continues his remarks on Hegel in a masterful paragraph in which he in effect spells out Hegel's bringing together the dialectical movement of logical thought with the chronological development of history. In that development, Hegel sees figures as diverse as Plato, Napoleon, and Goethe in terms of a movement of the rational subject through contingency and contradiction to reconciliation, a movement of spirit. With reality considered as historical, then, this movement is one in which God is “Thinker; and he is Thought; and finally he is the Act of the Thinker finding himself in what is thought” (134–35). Jenson rather colorfully describes Hegel's God as “absolute Statesman-Poet-Philosopher. God is just what Augustine said: Mind and Knowledge and Love that joins them.” In this varied movement of spirit, however, Hegel takes the world as “God's Object, rather than Jesus” (136).

In the third and final step in this fifth section of chapter 4, Jenson moves on to Karl Barth and his early twentieth-century revival of a more radical trinitarianism before making a few further proposals of his own in

the sixth and final section of the chapter. As Jenson boldly notes, "Only put *Jesus* in place of Hegel's 'world,' and you have the doctrine of Barth's *Church Dogmatics*, volume 1/1—which observation takes nothing from the extraordinary ingenuity of Barth's move" (136). Jenson first recalls Barth's answer to various questions concerning God: "*God* reveals himself. He reveals himself *through himself*. He reveals *himself*." With this response, Barth rejects all human striving and thus avoids both subordinationism and modalism. It is always God acting. The same answer to the questions of who is revealed, what is done, and what revelation accomplishes does not reduce the three questions to one. Then Jenson, in noting Barth's adapting much of the trinitarian tradition, says that the notions of act and repetition are central. For Barth, God is the one God in a triple repetition, and only in this repetition. In Jenson's evaluation, "It is Barth who taught twentieth-century theology—or the lively parts of it—the importance and point of trinitarian discourse" (138). Yet Jenson carefully remarks that there remains room for further reflection after Barth.

In the sixth and final section of chapter 4, "Proposals" (138–48), Jenson presents several further trinitarian insights of his own, which he at one point speaks of as required modification of past teaching (141). The first of these is to cease thinking of God as timeless (138). Here he refers back to Lutheran scholastic attempts to rework Trinity in the light of Reformation insights, which attempts were rather unsuccessful. At this point, Jenson refers approvingly to Rahner's axiom, and that of Eberhard Jüngel as well, that "the 'economic' Trinity *is* the 'immanent' Trinity, and vice versa" (139). But then he qualifies his agreement by saying that the unity of economic and immanent Trinity is an eschatological unity. Jenson recognizes that the notion of immanent Trinity is there to protect divine freedom. He says God would be Trinity without the creation and revelation of which we know, but that we have no way of knowing anything about the God who would still be triune. He argues that in the present situation a prior or past immanent Trinity, in which the *Logos* is a-temporally and *asarkos*, simply perpetuates the notion of a timeless and changeless deity. Rather, for him the second Person of the Trinity is the human person, Jesus of Nazareth, and his conversations with the Father and actions on earth are divine trinitarian conversations and actions. For, "truly the Trinity is simply the Father and the man Jesus and their Spirit as the Spirit of the believing community. This 'economic' Trinity is *eschatologically* God 'himself,' an 'immanent' Trinity." A nontemporal immanent Trinity would provide only the spurious freedom of unaffectedness. Real freedom is the possibility and openness to the future.

"Genuine freedom is Spirit." We can say God is Spirit only if we think of "God's eternity as the certainty of his triumph" (141).

The second of Jenson's further trinitarian insights involves modifying the classical understanding of the triune God framed only in terms of relations of origin. He proposes to replace the unidirectional trinitarian movement of unoriginated beginning with the Father who begets the begotten Son and who together breathe forth the Spirit who is breathed. In his proposal, he replaces this simple, forward movement that points only in the direction indicated by time's arrow with a more complex movement in which there is mutuality of relations among the divine Identities, as witnessed to in the Scriptures. So the Father is no longer the unique and only source of deity. Rather, in part at least to overcome the danger of subordinationism, Jenson works with the biblical notions of witness and freeing: "The Spirit's witness to the Son, and the Son's and the Spirit's joint reality as the Openness into which the Father is freed from mere persistence in his pretemporal transcendence, are equally God-constituting with the traditional relations" (142). Jenson provides a revised formulation, diagrammed in the text (143), with the following terms being taken from various parts of the diagram. That formulation moves from Unoriginated to Unsurpassed in a movement from Father who begets to Son who is begotten to Spirit who is breathed by Father and Son. The Spirit in return frees the Father and is thus freed, witnesses to the Son and is thus witnessed. With the Spirit as future, the more complex trinitarian movement is characterized as Unsurpassed in parallel with the initial notion of Unoriginated. Unsurpassed brings into consideration the Gospel as promise, referring to the resurrection of Jesus and final fulfillment in the Spirit.<sup>14</sup> As biblically appropriate, God is Spirit.

We might identify, as a third proposal or insight, Jenson's further consideration of "the Augustinian-Hegelian discovery of God's personhood, in the modern sense." He summarizes that understanding of personhood as follows: "God . . . is himself as Subject; is himself his own Object, to be self-consciousness; and, discovering *himself* as object, *is* himself only as the occurrence of this discovery, to be Spirit." But in this understanding God still remains a pure monad in relation to creation, and a monad cannot be personal in the modern relational sense of that word. We remain with the Hellenic understanding of eternity as timelessness and consciousness-as-substance (144). We need to see that neither humans nor God are person without others, without community.

Jenson fills out this affirmation by means of a further reflection on Jesus of Nazareth. In three brief steps, he first refers to the resurrection as

rendering Jesus' intention, namely, particular life and death, unsurpassable. In what might well be a variation on Hegel's notion of the relationship between master and slave, he argues that persons address themselves to one another in such a way that they become object to one another, for "true mutuality is *mutual* self-objectification." When God addresses us, God grants us an object: "Jesus is the object and his resurrection is the grant" (145).

In a second step, Jenson argues that for this revelation in Jesus to be true Jesus must himself be the one in whom, in words important in view of our present concerns, "God knows and wills himself. The object to which we look as we attend to the gospel, the temporal Jesus, is the same object that God intends in the 'immanent' self-consciousness that is his life . . . the temporal Jesus is a second identity in God . . . God has himself as his own Object, to be personal being and so to be Spirit." And in a third step, Jenson takes up more directly the question as to how the personal, including the way in which the term is used of God, is communal. He does this by asserting that we have ourselves only through an other, for through communication we share also the way we perceive ourselves. He maintains, nevertheless, that God would be community even in God's eschatological immanence, even without creation. Though we do not know how there would be community (146). He brings his corrective remarks on the Augustinian-Hegelian insight to a close with the proposal that "begets" be replaced with "intends" and "breathes" with "gives." So in a third and final diagram, he shows that "the Father gives and intends, the Spirit frees and witnesses, Jesus is intended and is witnessed to. And interpreting each pair personally, we get: the Father gives and intends = Subject; Jesus is intended and is witnessed to = Object; the Spirit frees and witnesses = is Spirit" (148).

We are justifiably tempted to identify Jenson's last chapter, "*Triune Identity*," as the last act in Jenson's narration of this trinitarian drama. It is a fitting, integrating consideration which brings this drama to final resolution in an understanding of the triune God. After recalling that the trinitarian God "is an event, and one . . . constituted in relations and personal in structure . . . an event between Father, Son, and Spirit" (161), he turns to Gregory of Nyssa's idea of divine infinity and works from there to present his own understanding of the divine *ousia* in terms of Gregory's understanding of divine *ousia* as, Jenson says, temporal infinity (165). We will not follow in detail Jenson's dense, dialectical presentation with its numerous metaphysical implications. Rather, we will simply highlight several aspects of his thought, especially several concerning overall approach, structure, and

phrasing more particularly pertinent to our present interest in possible ways in which Jenson's trinitarian thought might echo Idealist thought.

In the first of four sections in this chapter, "Infinite Deity" (162–68), Jenson takes up Gregory of Nyssa's revolutionary idea that, in contrast to the Hellenic notion of God, God's *ousia* is not made up of a series of attributes. Rather, it is constituted by God's own unboundedness and temporal unhinderedness, to use Jenson's words (164, 166). With multiple references to Ekkehard Mühlenberg's classic study on Gregory's notion of God's infinity, *Die Unendlichkeit Gottes bei Gregor von Nyssa*,<sup>15</sup> Jenson takes up Gregory's position that "God is eternal in that he envelops time, is ahead of and so before it" (165). We can, with a couple citations, give a taste, and regrettably only a taste, of what Jenson is rather eloquently affirming: "That time cannot overhaul him is what Jesus receives from his relation to the Father. Just so, the Spirit that 'goes out' from them is the very Power of futurity." And, at greater length,

The three identities are identities of *one* God . . . Jesus' love is the love of God in that it is in all ways final. . . . The structure of transcendence . . . is the freedom of the future to overcome all persistence, and just so to fulfill all that otherwise would merely have persisted. It is Spirit. Thus each identity has its priority. The Son is epistemologically prior. The Father has the ontic priority; he is the given transcendence to Jesus, and the given of hope and love. But the Spirit has the metaphysical priority . . . It is this structure of priorities that is the "substantiality" of God. (166–67)

Jenson moves forward in the second section, "Triune Infinity" (168–76), to "adumbrate a trinitarian concept of infinite futurity" (169). Here Jenson soars off into his own reflections on trinitarian temporal infinity. He opts for an understanding of spirit as spirit-of someone. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus and the Father. In this way, Jenson avoids a merely infinite succession of temporal moments. Triune infinity is, rather, "the inexhaustibility of the relation between Jesus as the final Lord and all that precedes his coming" (170). True temporal infinity is the transformation achieved by love occurring in and as the life of the historical Jesus of Nazareth including plot, sequence, and particular death. In giving himself, Jesus is the one whose individuality is open in relationship to others with "no end to mutual possibility" (171). Eschatologically promised love, "the

infinite futurity that encompasses all things[,] is the space of utter freedom that Jesus and we will occupy" (173).

Working with "love" to speak of infinite futurity, Jenson finds he has to understand this infinity in personal terms. With this move he now speaks of the Father and of related considerations he describes as metaphysical. Among them, he first mentions that thinking of God as personal leads us to think of the Father as one who thinks and wills himself in the Son, with the Spirit as love uniting his knowing and willing. Of particular interest, "The Father *intends* himself in the Son and intends all creatures by the way he intends the Son. Divine infinity is the infinity of this intention; that is, it is the infinity of a specific—loving—*consciousness*" (173). Jenson then reflects briefly on the notion of consciousness as being centered only if given an object. In a move now closer to what Hegel had said of master and slave, he speaks of consciousness as being centered as self-consciousness only if some objects are themselves subjects. Jenson then considers this insight in relation to the Father and the Son. He says an actually infinite consciousness would be one that was centered on a true object without thereby being hindered in relation to other objects. He finds this other in Jesus who is not "merely" God but a creature identifying with sinful humankind as the one for others (174).

But we are not, then, for Jenson to think of the Father as some sort of supernatural person over against us. It is the Trinity that is the conscious person. "The Trinity is constituted a centered and possibly faithful self-consciousness by his object-reality as Jesus, the Son." Only Jesus can truly be grasped as an individual personal something, which cannot be appropriately said either of Father or Spirit. Jesus is the second and objective identity of God. The being of God the Father is that of being so addressed by the Son. The being of God the Spirit "is being the spirit of this communication" (175). But Jesus does not create Father and Spirit. Rather, all three identities are relations.

Jenson brings this second section, on triune infinity, to a close with a final, metaphysical remark. He admits that he is determining the metaphysical or general by the particular, namely, the individual, Jesus. He says, on the other hand, that Hegel attempted to bring the general and the particular together in his generalized trinitarianism by setting up the universe as object or "Son" rather than just Jesus. Hegel had tried, unconvincingly according to Jenson, to reinsert the individual, Jesus, into universal history which is not able to work without that historical appearance. In line with this more general metaphysical remark, Jenson closes this important second section by identifying temporal infinity as "the inexhaustibility of one event, the

final appropriation of all history by the particular love actual as Jesus of Nazareth" (176).

In the third section, "God as Event" (176–81), Jenson's considerations move from the structure of time to the notion of enduring entities on to the nature of an event and the understanding of God as event and enduring entity, indeed triune event. He goes on to recognize God and humans as personal, from which recognition there arise certain Augustinian analogies. He ends, acknowledging that the idea of God as event has been developed especially by Barth and by process theology.

For Jenson time is neither linear nor cyclical, either of which ultimately stresses persistence and implies that realities are substances or at least are acts and so forth of substances. He agrees, rather, with Wolfhart Pannenberg that the temporal process as usually understood must be replaced by a process "into the depths of our present lives." He accepts the need for this replacement, though he does not describe that replacement as Pannenberg does, namely, as, according to Jenson, a contortion of time. Jenson proposes that "the future whose oncoming temporalizes us is an appropriation to each other of the specific event of Jesus and all created history . . . a reaching *back in anticipation*" (177). An enduring entity, in turn, is "at any moment *an* entity by structural openness to the future and is the *same* entity as itself in the future moment by the identity of that future." Such enduring entities then have the same structure as an event. God in turn is both enduring entity and event, but not in the way in which humans are. Jenson writes that we are an event by virtue of the future triumph of Jesus. God does the same but "is himself that event . . . a triune event" (178). Indeed, that God and we are personal provides the basis for the Augustinian analogies as discoveries of our personhood but does not mean that we are triune.

Jenson closes this third section with several remarks on efforts by Karl Barth and by process theology to speak of God as event, an interpretation endemic in contemporary theology (179). Regarding Barth, he says Barth's initial trinitarian focus enabled him to move away from the Hellenic identification of God. Barth further spells out the nature of this triune event as love and freedom in later volumes of his *Church Dogmatics*, which much subsequent theology has neglected to its loss. Yet, Barth too has unfortunately focused on Christ's primal reality rather than his final reality. According to Jenson, process theology in turn regrettably does not, ultimately, understand God as event, despite its best intentions. In process theology an enduring event is only a sort of abstraction from a series of momentary events. In a delicate analysis, Jenson sees God in process thought, especially that of



Hartshorne, as abstract, a “timelessly given structure of relations between all events” (181). For Jenson, process theology contributes a great deal, but not to understanding God as event.

Jenson ends this chapter 5 with a very brief fourth section entitled “Being” (181–82). To the question, “What is being?” he responds in a way he describes as aphoristic:

To be God is to anticipate a future self by an inexhaustible interpretive relation to an other that God himself is; to be a creature is to anticipate a future self, by a finite interpretive relation to an other that the creature is not; being is interpretive relatedness across time . . . to be is to rise from the dead. Such is the description of reality that coheres with trinitarian doctrine of God. (182)

### Transatlantic Idealist Echoes

In his afterword to *Triune Identity*, Jenson refers briefly to the fact that, for him, “Christian experience has a definite logical structure” (186). Again, by way of anticipation, we might recall in this regard our earlier remark that time replaces conceptual thought as basic movement or plot. Jenson has worked to refine and further specify this insight, carrying recent reflection on God and God’s relation to history to its final extreme, we could say, in defining the triune God as the true temporal infinite. I would spontaneously suggest that remarks such as those regarding a true temporal infinite witness in various ways to the continuing, indeed significant influence of post-Kantian German Idealism on recent trinitarian thinking, even in North America. To back up this initial impression and to flesh it out in some detail, I would suggest that we keep in mind the previously referred to more diffuse influence of German Idealist thought as we proceed in the following way. First, we will gather a random but I think helpful sampling of what others have remarked concerning possible resemblances between Jenson’s thought and that of post-Kantian German Idealism. Second, we will review his exposure to and knowledge of German Idealism. Third, we will note his remarks concerning German Idealist thought and trinitarian thinking in particular. And, fourth, we will discuss aspects of his thought which might indicate either a more direct or at times more mediated possible influence of German Idealism on his own trinitarian thought.

First, then, we should note in preliminary fashion that numerous writers have commented on possible resemblances and parallels, echoes I will prefer to call them, between Jenson's thought and that of post-Kantian German Idealism. In so doing, these writers have at least implied a certain Idealist influence on Jenson's thought. They have usually done this as a way of negatively critiquing one or another aspect of that thought.<sup>16</sup> By way of example, among those who point out Idealist characteristics we can cite John Byung-Tek Song. Song writes that "Jenson does seem to reflect the philosophical ethos of our day—that is, Hegel, Fichte and Schelling"—when Jenson spells out his own theological position on divine im/passability.<sup>17</sup> Song seems hesitant about Jenson's position. Though in this remark Song is focusing on a specific aspect of Jenson's overall trinitarian thought, his comment remains striking and leads us to suspect he would not hesitate to apply it to that thought more widely considered. Song refers to David Bentley Hart, who speaks of a more specifically Hegelian influence on Jenson. Song notes that Hart finds "in Jenson's hermeneutic, a strong application of Rahner's rule [which] causes him to enmesh God in time, a 'restitution of Hegel's "Trinitarian" logic.'" <sup>18</sup> Hart himself speaks at some length<sup>19</sup> of what he sees as Jenson's inability, despite Jenson's major efforts, ultimately to avoid the necessity characteristic of Hegel's movement of thought. Hart recognizes that he himself owes a great debt to Jenson, who "was especially patient and good-humored in allowing me to argue with him over my differences with him regarding how one should understand the relation between the immanent and economic trinities."<sup>20</sup> Indeed, Hart refers to Jenson's trinitarian thought as powerful and profound.<sup>21</sup> Yet concerning that thought he writes: "When the universal scope of an essentially Hegelian vision of Trinity has been reduced again to the more 'subjectivist' emphasis of an earlier transcendental idealism, one set of ambiguities replaces another."<sup>22</sup> In addition to Song and Hart, Wesley J. Wildman speaks of Jenson, among others, as developing his Christology out of a creative reworking of Schelling's and Hegel's philosophies of history, that is, out of the trinitarian history of God.<sup>23</sup> With more specific reference to Trinity, several commentators have focused their remarks on their perception of some resemblance of Jenson to Hegel on the question of God in relation to history. For example, Paul D. Molnar speaks of Jenson's advancing "a Hegelian notion of God's involvement with history."<sup>24</sup> And Jeremy Ive proposes that Jenson sees the three divine Persons as acting "*within* the historical process rather than constitutive *of* it," thus risking to reduce "the Trinity *to* the historical process, as Hegel has done."<sup>25</sup>

Authors such as these have identified what they considered to be resemblances and parallels between certain aspects of Jenson's thought and that of one or more of the post-Kantian German Idealists, at least implying that Jenson has been influenced by Hegel and perhaps Schelling as well. It is indeed the case that Jenson has himself had considerably more than a casual acquaintance with German Idealist thought and its varied understandings of Trinity. He pursued his studies with such theologians as Karl Barth and Wolfhart Pannenberg, who were themselves deeply cognizant of Idealist thought. I have proposed that their trinitarian thought shows clear family resemblances with that of various Idealists. And we have already noted Jenson's considerable studies in philosophy, including focus on Kant, Heidegger, and Gadamer. Jenson even set up, chaired and taught in a Department of Philosophy. Specifically regarding his knowledge of German Idealism, he has spoken explicitly of his more direct encounters with it. In so speaking, he has made it possible for us to document more closely that knowledge. In his "A Theological Autobiography, to Date," published in 2007, he recalls his wife, Blanche, had found it "odd that I knew quite a lot about what happened in Germany in the 18th and 19th centuries and almost nothing about what was concurrently happening in my own country."<sup>26</sup> At Heidelberg, his *Doktor-Vater*, Peter Brunner, had insisted he do a doctoral dissertation on Karl Barth on the election of Christ. But he quickly found himself "catching up what I did not know that a German faculty supposed everyone did: Kant, Schelling, Schleiermacher, Hegel, etc. Only about Kant did I have a clue. Lectures by a just beginning *Privatdozent*, Wolfhart Pannenberg, were a big help with the others." Pannenberg led Jenson to see that "if there is one God and he is triune, reality must be historical, history must be a whole with an outcome, and revelation must be God's inner-historical anticipation of that outcome."<sup>27</sup> It will be helpful to recall, as was previously mentioned in relation to Pannenberg's familiarity with German Idealism, what Jenson had written regarding Pannenberg's lectures: "I began my study at Heidelberg just as Pannenberg was beginning his teaching. My first semester, he lectured on nineteenth-century Protestant theology, which for most of the semester meant Fichte and Schelling and Schleiermacher and Hegel."<sup>28</sup> Of particular interest are Jenson's remarks about the famous German doctoral exam:

In the *rigorosum* I was congratulated on my grasp of Schelling: I have forgotten what that was. As for the Hegelianism for which some now berate me, I will admit only to great profit from and

disappointment by the *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, to hope that history does indeed have its own dynamic kind of logic, and to *ad hoc* use of Hegelian language and notions, which like Kantian turns are simply part of our historical situation.<sup>29</sup>

Jenson is, then, quite familiar with post-Kantian German Idealist thought, especially as expressed by Hegel.<sup>30</sup> He has at various times discussed that thought, usually praising certain of its contributions while equally if not more so chastising it for what he considered serious weaknesses on its part. By way of example, we can recall his rather well-known accolade of Hegel with its important caveat. In a note at the end of a long chapter on “Hermeneutics: Historicity” he refers to Hegel, remarking that “Hegel’s only real fault was that he confused himself with the last judge; but that is quite a fault.”<sup>31</sup> More specifically regarding Hegel on Trinity, we might well remind ourselves of one of Jenson’s several references to Hegel within the Augustinian-Western trinitarian tradition: “Hegel deliberately set out to reinvigorate the inherited doctrine of the Trinity by releasing its metaphysically revolutionary implications” (134).<sup>32</sup> Jenson is of course quite critical of the Hegelian understanding of Trinity in which God is, to put it without nuance, dependent on the world for God’s full personhood. Jenson’s earlier cited remark concerning Barth bears repeating: “Only put *Jesus* in place of Hegel’s ‘world,’ and you have the doctrine of Barth’s *Church Dogmatics*, volume 1/1—which observation takes nothing from the extraordinary ingenuity of Barth’s move” (136). And Jenson makes this solution his own, in his own way, when he writes: “To reclaim Hegel’s truth for the gospel, we need only a small but drastic amendment: Absolute consciousness finds its own meaning and self in the *one* historical object, Jesus, and *so* posits Jesus’ fellows as its fellows and Jesus’ world as its world.”<sup>33</sup> God’s personhood is not established in and through a relationship with the world but with Jesus of Nazareth.<sup>34</sup>

Our longer review of Jenson’s thought on Trinity has to some extent already brought to the fore areas in which we can recognize in that thought echoes of the post-Kantian German Idealists, especially Hegel. This longer review, plus our recognition of Jenson’s knowledge of German Idealism, will make it easier for us to move more quickly now to a direct consideration of various aspects of his systematic understanding of Trinity, in effect, as one person in three identities.<sup>35</sup> Our present consideration will be guided by interest in noting the impact of German Idealist thought on Jenson’s trinitarian thinking. Noting that impact serves as an important step in our

overall effort to document, thereby giving witness to, post-Kantian German Idealism's continuing trinitarian legacy.

Jenson's speaking of the triune God as one person has surprised some<sup>36</sup> and been rejected by others.<sup>37</sup> In attributing full personhood or selfhood to the triune God only as one person, Jenson embraces, but creatively modifies, what he refers to as the Augustinian-Hegelian notion of person. Person is that which comes to be personal through a relationship with an other, personhood "in the modern sense."<sup>38</sup> His motivation in so attributing personhood to God only, at least in *Triune Identity*, at the level of the divine oneness may well reflect an interest in avoiding the effective location of divine personhood primarily or even only in the Father. At the same time this attribution permits him to respect and try to account for the quite common Christian practice of addressing God as such in prayer. In any case, with a ring reminiscent of Hegel's thought in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Jenson summarizes what he refers to as the modern understanding of personhood, with specific reference to God, in the following way: "God . . . is himself as Subject; is himself his own Object, to be self-consciousness; and, discovering *himself* as object, *is* himself only as the occurrence of this discovery, to be Spirit" (144).<sup>39</sup> But then, to avoid a monadal understanding of God, Jenson further specifies this understanding of divine personhood by indicating that the human Jesus is the object and that the Spirit active in the world is the occurrence of this discovery. For Jenson, Jesus is the one in whom God knows and wills himself (146). Along with Barth, Jenson has indeed replaced Hegel's idea of the world as divine other with Jesus as divine other.<sup>40</sup>

As we have seen in our review of his trinitarian thought, Jenson, with this move to identify the human Jesus as the divine other, comes to focus on the events recounted in Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament but especially on their temporal character. In recalling Rahner's rule that the immanent Trinity is the economic Trinity and vice versa, he argues that the three divine identities of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are indeed their temporal interventions in the world and human history. He drops the notion of a pretemporal beginning and works simply with the time-conditioned movement of history.<sup>41</sup> The result is a focus on time and the logic of time as structure of the mutual relations among the three divine identities. Reference to this focus provides us with the opportunity briefly to note at least partially echoing parallels between, on the one hand, Jenson's temporalized understanding of the three divine identities and, on the other hand, Schelling's linkage of divine potencies with modes of time and Hegel's overall understanding of time.

In Jenson, the Father is the Given and past; the Son, the “present Possibility of God’s reality for us” and the active present; the Holy Spirit the “the Outcome of Jesus’ work” and future (24).<sup>42</sup> The interaction of the three divine identities occurs according to the threefold logic of time, namely, past, present, and future while not being restricted to it in a purely linear direction (177). In this identification of Father with past, Son with present, and Spirit with future Jenson parallels, better echoes, in many ways, Schelling’s similar linkage of divine potencies and temporal moments.<sup>43</sup> In effect, this dropping of a pretemporal beginning is a move that has resulted for Jenson in an emphasis on the constitutive function of time itself. He seems in his temporalization of the divine to be left with a notion of time in some ways similar to that of Schelling, once Schelling’s notion of the Father considered as initial pure act of personal freedom has been dropped. In addition, he seems to embrace more especially the view of time of which Hegel spoke in his preface to the *Phenomenology*. There time was “the existent Notion itself.”<sup>44</sup> In speaking of the notion or concept as existent Hegel is, in a sense, comparing the phenomenological realization of the concept with its presentation in logic as nontemporal, dialectical movement in the form of pure thought, the first moment or sphere in Hegel’s overall, triadically structured encyclopedic system. In his narrative Trinity, Jenson has in effect replaced Hegel’s logic of the concept with the logic of time.<sup>45</sup> One would be tempted to suggest that the structured movement of the concept becomes temporal plot-line in Jenson’s narrative.<sup>46</sup>

But perhaps here the word “suggest” is too weak. For Jenson himself writes concerning plot in relation to Hegel: “The future that opens a narratable history shapes that history, and after the fact this shaping may sometimes be discerned. Vice versa, what can be seen to shape a plotted history must, if the discernment is true, in some future occur within that history. Or, at least, so the church from the first understood history.” To this Jenson attaches a footnote: “That for the modern world the insight was stated by Hegel should not in itself discredit it.”<sup>47</sup>

It is interesting to note that Jenson had already in his 1969 publication, *God after God*, spoken of plot in relation to Hegel: “Hegel develops a mode of thinking which finds the intelligibility of reality exactly in the *plot* of the drama of contradiction, resolution and new contradiction, i.e., in the plot of history in its freedom and conflicts.”<sup>48</sup> Jenson’s later trinitarian thought, especially concerning Trinity and the complex notion of time, seems quite consistent with Jenson’s earlier reflections carried out in dialogue with Barth. Again, in *God after God* Jenson treats of his understandings of

time and its triplicity as the setting of the plot of life whose occurrence is God.<sup>49</sup> In dialogue with Ernst Fuchs he comes to consider time as being<sup>50</sup> and speaks of the Spirit as future, the Father as past, and the Son as present.<sup>51</sup> But he identifies Barth as what we could call the more immediate root of his thinking of God in terms of temporality when he acknowledges that “the temporality of the triune God is thoroughly worked out by Barth.”<sup>52</sup> It would seem, then, that Barth serves as bridge between Hegel, along to a lesser degree with Schelling, and Jenson on time.<sup>53</sup>

Barth seems as well to have helped transmit Idealist insights concerning the structure of Hegel's concept (*Begriff*) to Jenson. While Jenson does not of course refer directly to notion or concept, he does work with a dynamic idea of *perichōrēsis* or mutual interaction of the three divine identities in which they establish their identities in and through that temporal interaction. This mutual interaction recalls the relational character of Hegel's concept of subject and person. By way of further recall, Jenson says that “the Father gives and intends, the Spirit frees and witnesses, Jesus is intended and is witnessed to. And interpreting each pair personally, we get: ‘The Father gives and intends = Subject; Jesus is intended and is witnessed to = Object; the Spirit frees and witnesses = is Spirit’ ” (148). The notion of identities is of course Jenson's own novel way of referring to persons or *hypostases*. But the mutual, historically and, more precisely, temporally occurring interaction among the three identities as the repeated identity of one God (166) recalls something of Barth's trinitarian reflections both earlier and later on in the *Church Dogmatics*. That interaction recalls as well Pannenberg's speaking of three centers of action constituted by mutual relations rather than merely relations of origin. Jenson maintains the overall threefold Hegelian structure of subject and person. But, in fact his focus, as well as those of the later Barth and especially Pannenberg on various New Testament descriptions of the interactions of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, resembles that of Schelling himself. Schelling had described the development of three divine potencies into three divine Persons by mining New Testament resources. Like Schelling, now Barth, Pannenberg, and Jenson have worked with a more literally interpreted reading of New Testament descriptions of the activity and interaction of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Jenson further describes the interaction among Father, Son, and Spirit by referring to aspects of what is surely Hegel's presentation of the relationship between master and slave in the *Phenomenology*.<sup>54</sup> Jenson spells out the way in which the three divine identities address themselves to one another. They become object to one another, for “true mutuality is *mutual* self-

objectification.” As we had noted in the course of our reading of Jenson, in a move now even closer to what Hegel had said of master and slave, Jenson speaks of consciousness as being centered as self-consciousness only if some objects are themselves subjects. He then considers this insight in relation to the Father and the Son. “An actually infinite consciousness could only be one that encountered a genuine, resistant object, and so was centered, without thereby being impeded in his intentions of other objects.” He finds this other in Jesus, “a creature, an other than mere God,” who is identified with sinful humankind and yet who is “the creature for all others” (174),<sup>55</sup> thus permitting the Father to intend as well all of creation. Jesus is the way.

To identify the three divine identities, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and their dynamic interaction, Jenson has brought together in a creative synthesis a variety of elements. These include, among others, the Aristotelian-Hegelian, as he describes it, modern understanding of personhood and Hegel’s reading of the master-slave relationship. He has thoroughly reviewed Hebrew Scripture and New Testament narratives witnessing to temporally occurring divine action in history, especially in the Exodus and in the resurrection of Jesus. He has built on insights of Barth and perhaps Pannenberg, whether their own or Idealist insights mediated through them. One notes as well a more vaguely discernible move of development toward freedom in the Spirit. With particular reference to this last point, for Schelling the development took the form of potencies becoming persons. But for Jenson the development involves, in somewhat Schellingian fashion, three identifiable instances of the divine interacting with one another and with creation in such a way as to reveal or, better, to constitute their unique identities. In a way more reminiscent of Schelling than Hegel, Jenson sees the three divine instances as mutually interacting, in time, to bring creation to its eschatological culmination in a divine, for Jenson now, temporal infinity (168–76). His term “temporal infinity” recalls especially Hegel’s idea of the true or inclusive infinite.<sup>56</sup> Jenson identifies this temporal infinity as immanent Trinity (141).

We turn now to a brief consideration of this final, temporal divine inclusivity, which consideration will provide the occasion for us to bring together remarks on further possible echoes, in Jenson’s trinitarian thought, of that of the post-Kantian German Idealists, especially Hegel and Schelling.

Jenson has, as we will recall, turned to Gregory of Nyssa’s idea of divine infinity to anchor in patristic thought his own understanding of the divine *ousia* in terms of Gregory’s understanding of divine *ousia* as temporal infinity (165).<sup>57</sup> Jenson speaks of God’s own unboundedness and temporal



unhinderedness (164, 166). He proposes that "if temporal reality is bracketed by the specific eternity of the triune God, it is bracketed by the specific deity of this God, by unbounded futurity" (168). Jenson is working with Gregory's position, which for Jenson as we have seen can be formulated as "God is eternal in that he envelops time, is ahead of and so before it" (165).<sup>58</sup> Indeed, for Jenson himself "the very process of time is in fact a reaching *back* in *anticipation* . . . the future . . . is the *interpreting* of all prior occurrence" (177). There has been some discussion as to whether this reading of Gregory's notion of divine infinity as temporal infinity is truly representative of what Gregory had in mind. Jenson draws upon Ekkehard Mühlenberg's highly respected and often cited study, *Die Unendlichkeit Gottes bei Gregor von Nyssa*,<sup>59</sup> to confirm his reading of Gregory of Nyssa's divine infinity as temporal infinity. But others have challenged Jenson's reading of Gregory's divine infinity as temporal.<sup>60</sup> Jenson has acknowledged that his reading of the tradition, "while as accurate as I could make it, is not systematically neutral" (xii). He recognizes that we may not be able fully to distinguish where his reading of Gregory's thought ends and his own begins (162). It may well be that Jenson tends to read patristic authors through a more Idealist, or at least Idealist influenced, lens.<sup>61</sup> Gregory may or may not have given some indication that he was thinking in terms of a temporal infinity. In either case, Jenson's understanding of infinity as inclusive temporal infinity clearly manifests, in its inclusiveness, characteristics of Hegel's true infinite inclusive of finitude, including infinite progression now read by Jenson as temporal succession. It is as if Jenson in the trinitarian script he is writing has transformed Hegel's more spatially imaged idea of the true infinite into a temporally formulated understanding of it in which the triune God is never temporally bounded or surpassed.<sup>62</sup> In effect, whereas for Hegel God was the relationship between self and other expressed in terms of conceptual thought, for Jenson God is that relationship expressed in terms of temporal coherence.

Underlying Jenson's thought of the true infinite as temporal infinity is, of course, his strongly held conviction that we must rid ourselves of a substance-based notion of reality. He does this by embracing the overall, especially Idealist thrust of a shift from substance to subject, expressed by Hegel, for example, as substance becoming subject.<sup>63</sup> This shift, combined with the rejection of a pretemporal beginning, results in Jenson's dynamically developing notion of God now as temporal movement of Spirit. Jenson sees this notion as not only compatible with, but fundamentally true to, the Scriptural witnesses concerning God. In line with the general thrust of

Hegel's and Schelling's trinitarian thought as a triadically structured movement resulting in a final, inclusive fulfillment in the Holy Spirit, an overall movement of Spirit, Jenson sees the Eschaton as the Holy Spirit reaching back from the future in anticipation and bringing the unbounded love expressed by Jesus to full fruition (166–67, 176–77).<sup>64</sup> In his temporalization of the Trinity, Jenson has fully embraced what he calls the modern notion of personhood. With his idea that the triune God is person and personal, he has developed his trinitarian thought as a movement of free and inclusive divine, temporally constituted subjectivity, a movement realized in, though, and as the three divine identities in their mutual interaction.

Jenson has created something truly new.<sup>65</sup> Still, various considerations such as the ongoing, diffuse influence of post-Kantian German Idealism on American thought help us recognize thought patterns and language in his own trinitarian thought which echo such patterns and language in German Idealist thought, especially that of Hegel but also of Schelling. Further considerations or factors so helping us include German Idealism's influence through personalist currents of thought, Jenson's own familiarity with German Idealist thought gained through both direct and more mediated contact with it,<sup>66</sup> and his own statements regarding it. A further factor, especially characteristic of Jenson's thought, is the verve of his dynamic and narrative way of saying what he says. His choice of expressions and formulation of various phrases helps give expression to and win the reader's interest in his transformation of Hegel's logic-based trinitarian plot into a temporally structured one. In listening to what he says and the way he says it in his quite original presentation of Trinity, we hear creatively sounded echoes, sometimes loud and clear and at other times more muted and diffuse, of post-Kantian German Idealist thinking. In his trinitarian thought Jenson is a premier American witness to the continuing, even cumulative legacy of German post-Kantian Idealist trinitarian thought.<sup>67</sup>



## Catherine Mowry LaCugna

### *One Trinity of Communion among Persons*

Catherine Mowry LaCugna (1952–1997) joined the Notre Dame University Faculty in 1981 after finishing her doctorate at Fordham University on Hans Küng's methodology.<sup>1</sup> She taught Systematic Theology at Notre Dame, where she eventually held the Nancy Reeves Dreux Chair of Theology. Greatly appreciated by students, she received the Sheedy Teaching Award of the Notre Dame University College of Arts and Sciences in 1996. Briefly, and for now only very initially stated, she stands out for having argued strenuously in favor of understanding Trinity as a single trinitarian movement or, better, life of communion among relationally constituted divine and human persons. Indeed, her primary concern was to develop what she called a practical understanding of Trinity, a concern so well indicated by the title of her major book on Trinity, *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life*.<sup>2</sup> In 1992 she won the First Place Award from the Catholic Press Association for this book. Before her untimely death, she intended to pursue further work in pneumatology. In her memory, the Catholic Theological Society of America established the Catherine Mowry LaCugna Award for New Scholars.

As we turn to a review of LaCugna's presentation of Trinity, we should already now note that Karl Rahner, John Macmurray, and John D. Zizioulas will mediate various elements of Idealist thought to her as she develops her understanding of Trinity. She embraces and reads, in one might say rather radical fashion, Rahner's axiom that the economic Trinity is the immanent

Trinity and vice versa, appeals to Macmurray's thought to anchor her insight that person is relational, and identifies with Zizioulas's assertion that person takes priority over substance.

### LaCugna on Trinity

In reviewing LaCugna's trinitarian thought, we will refer mainly to LaCugna's longer work, *God for Us*. In this study she brings together much of what she had explored earlier on in various shorter studies. She provides strategically placed, helpful summaries and methodological remarks, surely a pedagogically helpful lesson learned over her years of teaching. These summaries and remarks will help guide us as we select, present and then examine in further detail aspects of that thought more susceptible to being recognized as echoes of earlier, post-Kantian German Idealist trinitarian thought. In one of her more methodological remarks toward the end of *God for Us* she reviews the overall development of her trinitarian argument. It begins with an historical reconstruction in part 1 of this study, where she notes problems arising from the separation of *theologia* and *oikonomia*. She sees the doctrine of the Trinity being developed separately "from the experience of salvation, from sacramental and liturgical life, from other doctrines." Then in her methodological and metaphysical reconstruction in part 2 she argues the need for theology to work out of the recognized "unity of *theologia* and *oikonomia*" (382).<sup>3</sup> Part 1, "The Emergence and Defeat of the Doctrine of the Trinity," proceeds in six chapters. In them she examines the history of trinitarian thought, East and West, up to and including Thomas Aquinas in the West and Gregory Palamas in the East. Part 2, "Re-Conceiving the Doctrine of the Trinity in Light of the Mystery of Salvation," moves, in four chapters, from a consideration of what she identifies as method in chapter 7 to a longer examination of content in chapter 8. For the most part, chapters 9 and 10 provide further reflections on implications of her theological, and at times more philosophically rooted, positions taken regarding a single trinitarian movement or life of communion for various areas of study. She mentions theological anthropology, ethics, spirituality, and sacramental theology (381–82).

In part 1 LaCugna draws attention to the ancient Christian distinction between *oikonomia* and *theologia*, with more stress on *oikonomia* as referring, using her words, to the mystery of salvation and less focus on *theologia*, referring to the mystery of God (22–30). After a brief review of selected New

Testament texts, she leads us into a consideration of pre-Nicean Christian reflection, remarking that what we see is the economy's own order (*taxis*) which "marks the economy that expresses the mystery of God's eternal being (*theologia*).<sup>3</sup> All things come from God the Father through Christ in the Holy Spirit and return through Christ and the Spirit to God (25, see 12, 24–25). She will, especially in chapter 7, consider the patristic distinction between *theologia* and *oikonomia* preferable to the relatively more recent one between immanent and economic Trinity. For LaCugna, this latter distinction leads far too easily to the idea of two Trinities, one Trinity *ad intra* or within and another Trinity *ad extra* or without, that is, outside the Trinity (212).

Here in part 1 she reviews the history of trinitarian thought, East and West, from the perspective of the growing distinction and even separation of *theologia*, considered more and more as referring to God in Godself independently of the *oikonomia* or work of salvation (42–43). She sees this move toward separation verified, for example, in the case of the Cappadocians who developed an understanding of Trinity that more and more stressed self-relatedness over relatedness to us (57).<sup>4</sup> She has several concerns regarding Augustine's approach to Trinity, among which is the fact that Augustine stresses God's working *ad extra* as one (97–99). She speaks of his Trinity as the Trinity within (82),<sup>5</sup> a view of Trinity reinforcing the sense that the Trinity can be understood in itself and with less reference to the economy of salvation. LaCugna finds that after the Cappadocians and Augustine this overall movement toward a separation of *theologia* from *oikonomia* climaxes in the West with Thomas Aquinas, who first treats of God as one or *De Deo Uno* and then God as Trinity or *De Deo Trino*.<sup>6</sup> In the East the separation comes to full expression with Gregory Palamas. He makes a real distinction between the unknowable and incommunicable divine essence, including apparently the divine Persons, and the communicable divine energies through which God brings about, and relates with, creation (10, 188, 197).<sup>7</sup>

After what LaCugna identifies as her historical reconstruction of Trinity-related thought from the New Testament to Aquinas and Palamas in part 1, in part 2 she carries out, as has been mentioned, her methodological and metaphysical reconstruction of the doctrine of the Trinity. She entitles this part 2 "Re-Conceiving the Doctrine of the Trinity in Light of the Mystery of Salvation" (207) and proceeds in four chapters. She takes up method in chapter 7 (13, 249, 319) and content in chapter 8 (319). In chapters 9 and 10 she continues her reflection on Trinity, mostly considering various theological themes and the ways in which they become problematic when we separate *theologia* from *oikonomia*. She reinterprets these themes

positively in light of her proposed reintegration of *theologia* and *oikonomia*. We will focus more closely on chapters 7 and 8, in which she in effect reconstructs the early New Testament and pre-Nicene patristic focus on *oikonomia* (for example, 222–24), understanding *theologia* as contemplation of it (169). This reconstruction is presented, one might dare say in almost Hegelian fashion, as a return, through the history of the developing separation between *oikonomia* and *theologia*, to a renewed and enriched understanding of *oikonomia* as that in and out of which we understand *theologia*. In this renewed understanding of *oikonomia*, for LaCugna all of theology is doxology, praise of the God who is for us.

But here we are getting ahead of ourselves. We need to turn now to chapter 7, entitled “The Self-Communication of God in Christ and the Spirit” (209). As the title itself indicates, LaCugna accepts and will work axiomatically with Rahner’s general notion of Trinity as movement of divine self-communication.<sup>8</sup> More specifically, she takes up Rahner’s Rule, namely, that “the ‘economic’ Trinity is the ‘immanent’ Trinity and *vice versa*” (211).<sup>9</sup> She says that Rahner has gone in the right direction, but not far enough. In speaking of the possibilities and limits of Rahner’s axiom, she opens the way to her own proposal: “Is there a way to preserve a distinction of reason between economic and immanent Trinity without allowing it to devolve into an ontological distinction?” (217). LaCugna goes farther than Rahner does. For her, distinctions in the economy neither originate in nor need be based in distinctions in God (221, see 230–32).

At this point we would do well to step back from LaCugna’s text to note Elizabeth T. Groppe’s well-documented summary of the reasons why LaCugna generally prefers not to work with the distinction between immanent and economic Trinity. Groppe brings forth eight reasons, here closely paraphrased, which in fact give us a further sense of LaCugna’s concerns in developing her trinitarian thought. According to Groppe, for LaCugna immanent and economic terminology is imprecise and often misleading, may suggest two Trinities, does not promote a doxological understanding of theology and fails to allow for a careful handling, in theology, of the freedom of God. Furthermore, such imprecise terminology stands in the way of a deeper understanding of Incarnation and grace without “subsuming God into a world process,” blocks a consideration of the doctrine of the Trinity’s soteriological significance, and seems to continue a metaphysics of substance. Such terminology obfuscates the distinction between God and creature.<sup>10</sup>

We return now more directly to LaCugna’s text of *God for Us*. Here in chapter 7 we find that LaCugna does indeed seem more concerned with the

question of possibly ontologically distinct immanent and economic Trinities than at other points in her book. At some points she appears to be more open to the possible usefulness of an at least epistemological distinction between immanent and economic Trinities. But here she makes a rather forceful assertion: "There is neither an economic nor an immanent Trinity; there is only the *oikonomia* that is the concrete realization of the mystery of *theologia* in time, space, history, and personality" (223). She illustrates this *oikonomia* in terms of *exitus* and *reditus*, one overall movement representable as a parabola: descending as God (Father), Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit, with the world at the low point of the parabola, and ascending as Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ, God (Father). LaCugna arrives at her key point, namely, that Trinity is about God's life with us and ours with one another. She thinks here in terms of communion and indwelling: "God in us, we in God, all of us in each other" (228). With this point she opens the way to her consideration of content in chapter 8.

After this methodological reconstruction, radicalization we might say, of Rahner's Rule, LaCugna turns in her longer chapter 8, entitled "Persons in Communion" (243), toward a metaphysical reconstruction. In this metaphysical reconstruction she proposes shifting from a substance-based metaphysics to one stressing the priority of the person, with person understood in relational terms, hence, person-in-communion. She develops her person-based relational ontology in eight steps plus a concluding summary. In the first of these steps, "Person as Relation" (243–50), she examines Eastern or Greek thought as represented by the Cappadocians and interpreted by John D. Zizioulas.<sup>11</sup> She finds, in recapitulation as well as further development of what she had said earlier in part 1, that the Cappadocians had in effect recast Greek substance-based ontology with a relation-based one. They did this with their emphasis on the three divine *hypostases* as the ways in which the divine *ousia* or essence exists. The *hypostases* are themselves relations of origin, and God the Father is preeminently personal as the unoriginated but originating source of Son and Holy Spirit as well as of all of creation. So, from this Eastern perspective, all of reality is ultimately relational and person. LaCugna states rather forcefully that focusing on divine relations means personhood is constitutive of being (245).

LaCugna continues this first step as she takes up the Western or Latin perspective. She notes that Augustine, for example, rooted personhood more in the divine nature or substance, though with strong relational aspects as well. Aquinas himself stressed person as relation, though with a focus on relations within the Trinity itself. For LaCugna, the Greek approach



stressed the relational character as it worked more with the *oikonomia*. Still both Greek and Latin trinitarian thinking led to a reconstructed relational ontology of the person in communion. "*Personhood is the meaning of being*" (248). She stresses in a striking way the relationship between person and freedom when she quotes from Zizioulas: "The fact that God exists because of the Father shows that His existence, His being is the consequence of a free person; which means, in the last analysis, that not only communion but also *freedom*, the free person, constitutes true being" (249).<sup>12</sup> She sees the proposed relational ontology as focusing on personhood, relationship, and communion (250).

In this first step in chapter 8, LaCugna has set up her basic position concerning a relational metaphysics or ontology. In the rest of the chapter she will look at notions of personhood as she "think[s] about the relationship between *oikonomia* and *theologia* as a structuring principle for trinitarian theology" (249). So, in the second step, "Personhood in the Horizon of Modern Thought" (250–55), she briefly recalls Descartes's turn to the subject as basically non-relational self, Locke's working with self-consciousness, and Leibniz's consideration of personhood as self-awareness and self-presence. She speaks as well of Kant with his stress on morality. These were understandings of person in which "the tradition (of Latin theology) that had understood God as Supreme Substance gave way to the idea of God as Absolute Subject." At this point she refers to Moltmann and his insights in these regards (251).<sup>13</sup> She then describes Barth's trinitarian thought as a form of modalism and speaks of Rahner's quite similar conclusions. For LaCugna, both Barth and Rahner arrive at an impasse in their understanding of God as absolute subject. They shy away from working with the modern concept of persons as discrete self-consciousnesses in referring to the three divine *hypostases* but apply that concept to their understanding of the divine essence. LaCugna suggests an alternative when she notes that already in the "eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Feuerbach, Fichte and Hegel had argued that persons exist only in relation" (255). She recalls various philosophies, such as those of Whitehead, Sartre, and personalist philosophies which break away from the isolated Cartesian ego. As she has announced, her own presentation will now proceed as a movement through four spheres of discourse. She will examine the thought of the Scottish philosopher John Macmurray on person, the contemporary Greek Orthodox writer John D. Zizioulas's insights especially on communion, arguments developed in feminist and Latin American liberation theologies, and Trinity-based Roman Catholic and Orthodox ethics (254–55).

In the first of these studies, her first sphere of discourse, which is equally the third overall step in chapter 8, "Persons in Relation: The Personalist Philosophy of John Macmurray" (255–60),<sup>14</sup> LaCugna draws upon several aspects of Macmurray's personalist philosophy to reinforce her understanding of person as relation. Among the many elements she brings to discussion from that thought there is, first, the rejection of the Cartesian idea of the isolated individual or subject. For Macmurray the self is an agent, one who acts and is what one does. She summarizes his notion of the self as agent, "embodied, operative, material, *existent*. . . . a person directed toward other persons, or better, toward an entirely personal world. The Self can be a Self only in relation to other selves" (256). In referring to Macmurray's Buber-like language of you and I,<sup>15</sup> LaCugna stresses the importance of the notion of mutuality in establishing personal identity, whether the relationships be equal or unequal. We should note a second element in Macmurray's thought to which LaCugna calls attention, namely, Macmurray's idea of God. She quotes Macmurray as saying that God is "a personal Other who stands in the same mutual relation to every member of the community" (259).<sup>16</sup> We should as well briefly indicate a third element that LaCugna brings in, namely, Macmurray's emphasis on a positive understanding of community as a heterocentric communal way of life (257–58). In extrapolating from Macmurray's thought, LaCugna then defines a person as "*a heterocentric, inclusive, free, relational agent*" (259). She turns to John D. Zizioulas for clarification concerning community and communion.

This turn occurs in and constitutes her fourth step in chapter 8. Here LaCugna takes up the second of what she has called four spheres of discourse, the first having been that of Macmurray. She entitles this second sphere, "Persons as Ecstatic and Hypostatic: The Contribution of Contemporary Orthodox Theology" (260–66). Here she draws upon Zizioulas's thought especially as it is found in the first study, "Personhood and Being," in his volume of collected studies, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church*.<sup>17</sup> We can briefly review several aspects of LaCugna's drawing upon Zizioulas, but not so much at this point by following LaCugna's order of presentation. Rather, we will focus in a more synthesizing way on her uptake of Zizioulas on person as ecstatic and as hypostatic.

With Zizioulas, for LaCugna hypostatic recalls the Cappadocians' use of *hypostasis* to distinguish person from essence and substance (*ousia*) (261). She says that for Zizioulas this distinction means that the Cappadocians, and he with them, give priority to person over essence or substance, and

specifically divine Person over divine substance. In that person is essentially relational in the Cappadocian presentation, such reference to person gives rise to an understanding of substance as the communion of persons. Though such communion is only imperfect and partial in its human actualizations, it is perfect in its realization as what the triune God is. Hence, for Zizioulas there is an overall priority of person over being. LaCugna's stress on the hypostatic character of the person, meaning in fact on personhood as relational, brings us to the notion of person as ecstatic. Here, again following Zizioulas, LaCugna distinguishes between biological *hypostasis* characterized and structured by ontological necessity and what Zizioulas calls ecclesial *hypostasis* brought about through baptism. Ecclesial *hypostasis* is the relational being of personhood characterized and structured by ontological freedom (262). She quotes Zizioulas to the effect that true personhood is ecstatic in character, involving a free going out of oneself to another in love.<sup>18</sup> She adds that his way of relating freedom and nature, with freedom taken ontologically rather than morally, is rooted in the Greek trinitarian understanding of God (261). LaCugna brings her presentation of this second sphere of discourse to a close with a summary of what she takes from Zizioulas on person as free and relational in communion: "The constitutive elements of personhood are self-affirmation in freedom and not necessity; the affirmation by another in love; uniqueness, concreteness and unrepeatability; subsistence in communion" (265).

LaCugna enters into what she identifies as her third sphere of discourse when she develops the fifth step, "Persons Oppressed: The Trinity and Liberation Theologies" (266–78), in her overall argument in the present chapter 8. We will regrettably not be able to entertain a more detailed review here of this longer constructive consideration, which treats of subjects so important to and consonant with her stress on Trinity as *oikonomia*, God for us. Rather, we simply note first of all that LaCugna opens this reflection by recalling Macmurray's and Zizioulas's turning away from Cartesian individualism to an understanding of person as "relation-to-". She then develops this insight with reference to personhood's social dimension, a point she does not find in Zizioulas's thought. She reflects critically on the liberating functions of theological feminism and of the notion of *perichōrēsis* (266). With regard to theological feminism, she notes the difficulties inherent in a comparative theology of complementarity between men and women with, among others, the description of men as more active and women as more passive. She recalls that such understandings have sought justification in the trinitarian rootage of all in God the Father. She counters such

understandings by referring to Patricia Wilson-Kastner's calling upon the notion of relationality within God that leads to a richer and more complex understanding of men and women as "unique, embodied, and . . . equal *qua* person" (269–70). Each person, male and female, human and divine, is self-reflexive and has a capacity for self-transcendence. LaCugna quotes approvingly Wilson-Kastner's application of her thought to Trinity. God is "a unity of three centers of awareness and centeredness who are also perfectly open and interdependent on each other."<sup>19</sup> As LaCugna notes, this idea of three centers is just what Barth and Rahner avoided affirming.

LaCugna continues to work with the thought of Wilson-Kastner who, in order to establish divine unity, focuses on the idea of *perichōrēsis* as understood by Jürgen Moltmann.<sup>20</sup> Wilson-Kastner reviews the background to this patristic notion that, according to LaCugna, came to replace the earlier idea that divine unity was tied to the person of God the Father (270). Being-in-one-another, permeation without confusion, a sort of divine dance (272), came to be accepted as a description of the relations among the divine Persons in both East and West. However, especially in Latin trinitarian theology there remained the danger of considering this as occurring *in divinis* alone. LaCugna says it can be better understood in terms of the *oikonomia*. She develops this idea by referring to the trinitarian thought of Leonardo Boff who, like Wilson-Kastner, does not identify the divine monarchy with that of the Father (275). She quotes Boff as saying that "the united society that exists [through *perichōrēsis*] in the Trinity is the foundation of human unity; the latter is inserted in the former."<sup>21</sup> This human unity, properly understood and realized, takes the social form of a community that is inclusive and constituted by interrelated equals.

After her considerable discussion of the liberating movements of theological feminism and Latin American liberation theology, LaCugna enters the fourth and final sphere of discourse to which she had earlier referred. This sphere now forms the sixth step in her overall argument here in chapter 8. She entitles this sixth step "Voices from Christian Ethics: Catholic and Orthodox" (278–88). As we did with regard to the third sphere, that of liberation theology discourse, again here we will simply note several points indicating the overall thrust of her argument. Here LaCugna dialogues with Margaret Farley, a Catholic moralist working with the notion of personhood in relation to Trinity. In this dialogue LaCugna carries out a series of reflections, in relation to Latin trinitarian theology, on the possibility of expressing the equality and mutuality of the divine Persons in various gender-based terms when they are understood within the framework of person as actively

receptive. But she proposes that, even more fundamentally, we should look at Jesus Christ, in whom there is expressed divine sexuality, that is, free and perfect relationality overcoming “the antinomies of maleness and femaleness” (281–82). She refers as well to the Spirit, actively receptive in animating the human community. With Farley, and stressing active receptivity, she agrees on the importance of a strong eschatological ethic of “interpersonal communion characterized by equality, mutuality, and reciprocity” (282).

LaCugna then turns to Greek trinitarian theology, referencing especially that of Stanley Harakas, an Eastern Orthodox ethicist whose thought is rooted in that of Gregory Palamas (283). After considering various Eastern notions such as the role of the divine *energeia* in relation to the unknowable divine *ousia*, she stresses the importance of the Eastern emphasis on person as constitutive of being which establishes an ontological foundation for a Trinity-based understanding. In this understanding personhood is the “norm of every relationship, every ethic, every institution, every decision” (286–87). She fears, though, that the unknowable *ousia* and revealed *energeia* distinction could weaken the general Eastern stress on the relation between God and economy. Ironically, she finds that Latin trinitarian theology with its heavy ethical emphasis seems to have more to say about persons in the *oikonomia*, though it stresses *theologia*. Greek trinitarian theology, which is less explicit in its reflection on specific ethical questions, seems to have less to say about persons in the *oikonomia*, despite the fact that person is what it stresses.

At the end of her reflection in this fourth sphere of discourse, LaCugna proceeds in a shorter but helpful synthesizing seventh step in her argument, entitled “Toward an Understanding of Persons in Communion” (288–92). Here in a series of italicized paragraph headings and a further nonitalicized remark she describes persons as being

*essentially interpersonal, intersubjective . . . ineffable, concrete, unique, and unrepeatable ecstasis of nature . . . the foundation of a nature . . . free-for, free-toward others, poised in the balance between self-possession and other orientation . . . catholic [inclusive and expressing totality] . . . requires ascesis . . . an exponential concept . . . with each new relationship we “are” in a new way . . . [those] living as persons in communion, in right relationship, [and this] is the meaning of salvation and the ideal of Christian faith.* (288–92)

Following on this summary presentation of what it means to be person, LaCugna brings together many elements of her overall understanding of Trinity in an eighth and final step in her argument, "Communion with the Living God through Christ in the Holy Spirit" (292–304). Her intention here is, briefly stated, to highlight from a trinitarian perspective several aspects of the work of Christ and the Spirit as person (316n137). She insists that Trinitarian reflection as such and the notion of personhood must be measured by revelation occurring "in the face of Christ and the activity of the Holy Spirit" (293). She proceeds to do this in three reflections, the first of which is entitled "Jesus Christ: The Communion of Divine and Human" (293–96). Here she recalls and works with the basic notion that person is, as she says, the foundation of nature. She draws attention to three characteristics of Jesus which flow from this notion of the ontological priority of person. First of all, she points out rather colorfully that Jesus was neither a doormat nor an autocrat (293). He was strong and yet tender, proclaimed the reign of God through service, dying for others. Second, Jesus was what LaCugna calls a Catholic person, namely, one who is inclusive. All he did was rooted in his person and served as an expression of who he was. He related well with women, showed concern for sinners, and was fully culturally conditioned. All this he was as a person. Indeed, when "Jesus' person is identified with God's *ousia*, then we must say that God suffers" (294–95). Third, Jesus is the divinized human being. He is the communion of divine and human and, as LaCugna says, the *perichōrēsis* of *theologia* and *oikonomia* (296).

In the second reflection, "The Holy Spirit: Uniting Persons in Communion" (296–300), LaCugna reminds us of ways in which we experience the Holy Spirit active in the world and in the Christian community. Among her many remarks, we should note, for example, that "the Spirit humanizes God, and also divinizes human beings." She insists that concentrating on the *filioque* origin of the Spirit in Father and Son along with the idea that *ad extra* God works as one will simply draw attention away from who the Spirit really is. Understanding who the Spirit is requires attention to the *oikonomia*. The Spirit is the Spirit of God, of Christ, and of the Christian community (298). The Spirit, as for any person, cannot be considered alone and without relational reference to others. As principle of communion, the Spirit is free with the freedom of a person, a freedom of love for and toward others. "God's freedom cannot be located in solitariness" (299).

LaCugna continues in a third reflection, "The Living God" (300–304), to reconsider several of the classical divine attributes. She recasts these attributes by shifting their point of reference from substance to person. Divine immutability means that God is "*immutably personal*." Impassibility needs to be interpreted "in the light of the cross" (301). God suffers in Christ, though this phrase requires careful interpretation. Also, God is incomprehensible not because the divine essence as substantial is unknowable by the human mind but because God as personal is ultimately mystery. Persons are "indefinable, unique, ineffable" (302). Unoriginate origin comes to express the fact that God is the source of all personhood and is, as such, directed outward toward others. As Creator, both Father and Mother indicate origin, with Mother in some ways a better way of referring to God. Incomprehensibility then is the unfathomable mystery of a God with us through Christ in the Spirit (302–03). And incorporeality is transformed into corporeality insofar as in Christ God has taken on the full human condition, while remaining in a sense incorporeal because God "is not exhausted or defeated by the economy." God is incorporeal in that the Spirit moves as it wills and yet becomes corporeal in the Spirit-established communion among persons, the Body of Christ. Regarding God's perfection, LaCugna brings her overall trinitarian thought together when she says God is the perfection of love, communion, and personhood rather than being mere self-sufficiency (303–04).

Here in chapter 8 LaCugna's argument in favor of the priority of person over essence or nature or substance, namely, persons in communion, proceeded in eight steps. More generally stated, LaCugna moved from considering person as relation to brief remarks on modern thought on personhood, Macmurray on persons, reference to Zizioulas on communion especially in relation to God, feminist and liberation theology critiques of unacceptable social situations. She continued with a consideration of Catholic and Orthodox ethics in relation to trinitarian thought, a summary review of the proper understanding of persons in communion, and, finally, the measure of these reflections on personhood in light of God's self-revelation in Christ and the Spirit. She brings the chapter to a close with several remarks further qualifying what she has said. She says that *theologia* exceeds *oikonomia* in the way in which being a person exceeds "even a life-time of self-expression" (304). She then proposes that using the word "person" of God does not describe the essence of God but indicates the ineffability of God. She ends the chapter with what would seem to be a rather surprising, longer remark, given the emphasis on the hypostatic

character of Father, Son, and Spirit. She stresses what is important is that God is personal and not whether God is “one person in three modalities, or one nature in three persons.” Trinity is about the “encounter between divine and human persons in the economy of redemption” (305).<sup>22</sup>

In chapters 9 and 10, LaCugna prolongs her trinitarian reflection with a series of more practical considerations flowing from her understanding of a single relational Trinity as communion of persons. In chapter 9, for example, she asserts that the best way to come to understand “God’s economy is *theology in the mode of doxology*” (320). Here she embarks on a series of enriching theological discussions carried out from the perspective of her having brought together *theologia* and *oikonomia* in a doxological trinitarian theology. This trinitarian theology includes both primary theology, which is ultimately Christian living, and secondary theology as systematic, conceptually expressed reflection on primary theology (357). It is at this point in her spelling out of theology and even all of Christian life as doxology that LaCugna cites, often and quite specifically, Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament (335–46). At the end of the chapter she summarizes these discussions, seeing doxological trinitarian theology as bringing together “spirituality with theology, orthodoxy with orthopraxis, the contemplative with the speculative, apophatic with kataphatic, the pastoral with the academic” (368).

In chapter 10 she further sketches out aspects of life in line with trinitarian faith (368). Among the various themes taken up, she works at length with the reign of God as “*where God’s life rules*” (383). Here she regularly and often refers to the Gospels of Matthew and Mark as well as to the Acts of the Apostles when she surveys New Testament teaching on the ways in which Jesus speaks of the reign of God and lives it in his own life (383–88). Jesus’ ways of speaking and living take on particular meaning for those who are to live in the household of God as persons in communion with God and with one another. LaCugna takes up as well the notion of God as *archē*. She recalls that in a truly trinitarian perspective divine monarchy is “the shared rule of equal persons in communion” (394) with all this implies in the social and political realms of human life when this life is seen as a share in divine life. Throughout this chapter LaCugna is concerned to highlight the practical character of the doctrine of the Trinity, including its implications for ecclesial living, sacramental life, sexual life, overall Christian ethical living, and spiritual life (377 with 400–10). She ends her study with the conviction that God’s being for us implies we share with one another as we live the life of God (411).



## Transatlantic Idealist Echoes

Hearing and recognizing Idealist echoes in LaCugna's trinitarian thinking can at first sight prove challenging. Though in *God for Us* she carries out a critical and constructive review of what she has identified as pertinent moments in the history of the development of trinitarian thought, for all practical purposes her review ends with Thomas Aquinas in the West and Gregory Palamas in the East. She works within the overall American intellectual context rather diffusely impacted by Idealist thought. But she only briefly refers directly to Idealist insights as when, for example, she says Rahner "is not echoing Hegel's idea that God's self-enactment is necessary in order for God to be God" (168). As we have seen, LaCugna also acknowledges that "already in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Feuerbach, Fichte and Hegel had argued that persons exist only in relation" (255).<sup>23</sup> She cites Jürgen Moltmann when she speaks of the movement from Descartes to John Locke and Kant as leading to understanding God as absolute subject (251). She does note that this notion of absolute subject is not foreign to, but of course fully restructured by, post-Kantian German Idealists. But if we are to catch the sounds of Idealist echoes in her trinitarian thought, we will in addition to these few references need to trace ways in which Idealist thought may have influenced her thinking more indirectly. We will want to attend to various authors to whom she refers and with whose thought she works, authors who themselves have been influenced directly or indirectly in their own trinitarian thinking by Idealist thought.

LaCugna has often enough referred to such trinitarian thinkers as Barth and Pannenberg who themselves surely manifest various Idealist influences in their thought. But the way in which she starts from, appreciates, and wants to push further Rahner's axiom, "*The 'economic' Trinity is the 'immanent' Trinity and the 'immanent' Trinity is the 'economic' Trinity*,"<sup>24</sup> makes of Rahner an ideal conversation partner of hers to whom we can turn. So we will begin with him in our effort to trace a path of more indirect Idealist influence on her trinitarian thought. As we have seen, she no longer wishes to speak of an immanent and an economic Trinity, as Rahner does. Already in discussing Rahner's axiom, she insists on only one Trinity, that of experience and not another beyond it (212, see 216, 223) and only one level, not two, *ad intra* and *ad extra* (228). She continues her reflection on a possible distinction between immanent and economic Trinity as epistemological rather than ontological, insisting that we must not think in terms of, and separate out, two trinities (229, see 217, 231). Rather, she

speaks of one Trinity of communion among divine and human persons in the *oikonomia*.<sup>25</sup> She sees “*the eternal begetting of the Son and the breathing forth of the Spirit taking place in God’s economy*” (354) with God’s economy in turn being “*the life of God and creature existing together as one*” (377). LaCugna has then offered a further, some might say radicalizing, clarification of the identity Rahner posits between economic and immanent Trinity when she takes it to mean one Trinity, namely, that of the *oikonomia*.

With LaCugna’s clarifying stress on the oneness of the Trinity in mind, we can now look at a question we had not explicitly raised in our treatment of Rahner in chapter 7 above. That question concerns a possible rootage of Rahner’s axiom itself in Idealist trinitarian thought. We propose to find a family resemblance between Rahner’s axiom and the thought of Hegel and Schelling and thus an Idealist influence, mediated through Rahner, on LaCugna’s trinitarian thought.

In the case of Hegel, from the perspective of his encyclopedic system we can say that he presents immanent Trinity twice: first, as the conceptual movement of pure thought in logic; second, as first moment in the triply structured movement of the consummate or Christian religion. In each case, immanent Trinity is contained, so to speak, as first moment ultimately taken up into the third dialectically developing moment. In the movement of logic, namely, that of pure thought, this inclusive third moment is the absolute idea and in the movement of the consummate or Christian religion it is, as Hegel comes to identify it in his 1831 lectures, the kingdom of the Spirit. These movements, and indeed the whole of Hegel’s encyclopedic system, constitute, dialectically speaking, one triadically structured movement of Spirit. Underlying this integrated and integrating conception of Trinity is of course the way in which Hegel relates the sphere of logic as movement of pure thought and the realphilosophical spheres, with these latter being the ones in which he presents the philosophies of nature and of Spirit. For Hegel “the relationship between logic and the spheres of nature and Spirit remains mutual, in that logic both is and contains the spheres of nature and Spirit in as it is their ‘archetype’ (*Vorbildner*) and the latter spheres in turn are and contain logic as their ‘inner formative principle’ (*inner Bildner*).”<sup>26</sup> Given for Hegel the inclusion of immanent Trinity within economic Trinity and the fact that they are aspects of, or perhaps better moments in, one overall movement of Spirit, it is surely the case that for Hegel immanent Trinity is ultimately the economic Trinity and vice versa. Hegel presents a single trinitarian movement of inclusive divine subjectivity, a movement of self-developing Spirit.

In the case of Schelling as of Hegel, reference to a movement of immanent and economic Trinity should be used carefully and with various qualifications. Furthermore, Schelling's presentation of Trinity is not as monosubjectively formulated as was that of Hegel. But Schelling did work with a series of three potencies effectively structuring for him all of reality from the willed arising of Father, Son, and Spirit as originating forms of these potencies on through history to the revelation of Trinity in the Christian religion. There the potencies of Son and Spirit effect through their, we could say, more dialogical interaction occurring in human consciousness ultimately resulting in an enriched and fuller reestablishment of the divine unity. This interaction is a movement of Son, Spirit, and Father, each one individually and the three together, from potency to personhood. In this scenario, we see as well in Schelling's thought an all-encompassing coherence of structured movement characterizing all of reality rooted in this single free divine movement of potencies becoming Persons. To this extent at least we can say that for Schelling the immanent Trinity is the economic Trinity and vice versa.

So with regard to Hegel and Schelling we would say that the immanent Trinity is the economic Trinity and vice versa in order, with this way of speaking, to reflect the movement from potentiality to realization of that potentiality. In comparison, Rahner, for his part, would first say that the economic Trinity is the immanent Trinity and then vice versa, surely due at least in part to his emphasis on the human experience of God based in the one divine self-communication. Especially Hegel but also Schelling would in fact seem to be stressing as much or even more the continuity, even ultimate identity, of movement between immanent and economic Trinity than does Rahner. To safeguard divine freedom and transcendence, he seems in his concrete treatment of Trinity to distinguish more strongly between the two while still insisting that one is the other. This position of Rahner's is rooted in his understanding of the relationship of God to us as one of true divine self-communication. Yet, considered within the context of our previous indication of Rahner's familiarity at least with Hegel, there are sufficient grounds here to speak in terms of family resemblance. That is, a family resemblance between the one overall single trinitarian divine self-development in the thought of Hegel and, perhaps less directly, of Schelling, on the one hand, and the insistence by Rahner, on the other, that the economic Trinity is the immanent Trinity and vice versa. This family resemblance permits us to claim for Rahner's axiom a certain Idealist paternity. Without wishing to push the familial image too far, we can I

think justifiably say that this family resemblance between Rahner's axiom and Idealist trinitarian thought permits us in turn to recognize a certain therewith mediated Idealist grand-parenthood to LaCugna's further development of Rahner's axiom. It is striking that LaCugna, in emphasizing one Trinity, seems at least in relation to this oneness to echo quite clearly the trinitarian thought of Hegel and Schelling. As we just saw, they themselves each proposed a single overall movement of Trinity, a movement respectively more monologically or dialogically structured. She seems, perhaps ironically, to be closer to these Idealist approaches than is Rahner in that he in fact continues to work with the distinction between immanent and economic Trinity.

Again, within the overall context of a rather diffused Idealist influence on American thinking LaCugna draws upon the thought of the Scottish personalist philosopher, John Macmurray. She does this to bring to the fore a more explicitly formulated notion of person as relational. Macmurray reacted strongly against Idealism, whether in its post-Kantian German forms and especially that of Hegel or in various forms into which Idealist thought and especially that of Hegel developed in England and Scotland. Yet we can still recognize some significant Idealist influence on various aspects of his thought and in particular on his notion of person as relational. And, as we have seen, it is to Macmurray's thought on person as relational that LaCugna appeals in support of the development of her own trinitarian thought. It is true that Macmurray rejected the overall Idealist idea, going back to Descartes and reaching a certain climax in the Hegelian concept as Macmurray understood it, of person considered as movement of thought. He replaced it with a view of person as agent, one who acts.<sup>27</sup> Still, he retained a sense of person recognizably close, at least structurally speaking, to the overall Idealist conception of person as dynamically developing in and through its relationship to an other.<sup>28</sup>

By way of recall, we should note that for Hegel in particular this dynamic development occurs as a dialectical movement of self-positing subjectivity in which, stated most generally, subjectivity gives rise to objectivity, the thinking through of which brings forth a renewed and more inclusive subjectivity. In Hegel's encyclopedic presentation, this movement of spirit takes place in the sphere of logic as inclusive subjectivity, in nature as self-othering of the idea, and then in and through art, religion, and philosophy as absolute subjectivity. In this overall movement of spirit, logic presents, in a certain pristine conceptual clarity, the structure of inclusive subjectivity as self-relationality.<sup>29</sup> Then, in the realphilosophical sphere of spirit and

more precisely in the moment of objective spirit as Hegel develops it in his *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*,<sup>30</sup> he speaks explicitly of person in various ways in line with his overall triadically structured dialectic. For present purposes it will be sufficient to note that for Hegel a person is a subject who has rights, recognizes that other persons have rights, and expects to have her or his rights respected by others.<sup>31</sup>

In line with this very general understanding of person, Hegel discusses the notion of person as, for example, the abstract holder of rights who then becomes subject actualizing his or her personal freedom in action (*Handlung*).<sup>32</sup> Given that Hegel's rather complex notion of person includes the idea that a person is an acting subject, it would seem Macmurray's notion of person as agent is not as far removed from certain aspects of Hegel's overall idea of person, at least in Hegel's *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, as Macmurray might have thought. In fact, Macmurray himself had continued to maintain a relationship between acting and thinking, with the former including the latter. As Macmurray writes, with a slight hint of Hegelian ordering, "A theory of action will exhibit the form of the personal by including within it, as its negative aspect, a theory of knowledge. . . . We may begin by defining action itself . . . as a unity of movement and knowledge."<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, "acting from the motive of care for others leads paradoxically to genuine self-realization."<sup>34</sup> He seems to be reacting negatively less to Hegel's presentation of person as subject who acts in the *Philosophy of Right* and more to Hegel's understanding of subject in the *Science of Logic*. He is so reacting when he insists that the other does not arise in Hegelian fashion out of the subject or self but is, rather, that in relation to which the subject or self, and more specifically, the person acts. For Macmurray the subject or self is person only in, though, and as this relation brought about through the self's acting. Hegel and Macmurray propose two quite different ways in which the subject or self relates to the other, especially when we think in terms of the Hegel of the *Science of Logic*. Yet in each case the subject or self is constituted as true subject or self, and in Macmurray's preferred term person, only through its being in relation with an other.<sup>35</sup>

I would suggest, then, that we find in Macmurray's understanding of the self as agent and person as relation a certain movement structured essentially the same way as we see in Hegel's notion of person as relation and even perhaps with Hegel's view of subject in action. As we have noted, LaCugna had herself as well acknowledged that Feuerbach, Fichte, and Hegel understood person as relational (255). So I would propose that LaCugna was not only herself aware of Idealist understandings of person but

has, in her insistence on personhood or subjecthood as relational (256), in fact echoed the overall post-Kantian German Idealist and especially Hegelian idea of person as relational. This judgment is based then not only on her own reference to Fichte and Hegel but also on the way in which this understanding of person was mediated to her through Macmurray.

In his history of Scottish philosophy, Alexander Broadie interestingly goes so far as to identify Macmurray, at least in some ways, with the long dominant Idealist philosophical tradition in Scotland when he lists Macmurray under the heading, "Aspects of idealism."<sup>36</sup> Surely Broadie is using the descriptor "idealist" in a fairly wide sense to indicate someone for whom the self, subject or, more exactly here, person is the ultimate form of reality. This self, subject, or person does not require reference as such to a continuing, underlying substance or essence. Fichte, Hegel, and Schelling had each in his own way so conceived the self without underlying substrate. Thus, Macmurray remains, fundamentally, identified with those who, like the post-Kantian German Idealists, had shifted from a substance-based metaphysics to a subject-based one. As was the case for Macmurray and for personalist philosophers in general, for LaCugna person is ontologically ultimate (301).

LaCugna reinforces her understanding of person as ontologically ultimate by referring, as we have seen, to John D. Zizioulas, Greek Orthodox theologian and Metropolitan of Pergamon. She finds very helpful his understanding of person as relational and as highest form of reality, namely, person as ecstatic and hypostatic. Of particular interest to us at this point is Zizioulas's attribution of his understanding of person as relational to the Cappadocian Fathers, Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa, and the latter's older brother, Basil of Caesarea. As previously noted, LaCugna herself cites directly two of Zizioulas's works, namely, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church*, chapter 1, "Personhood and Being,"<sup>37</sup> and an earlier article, "Human Capacity and Human Incapacity."<sup>38</sup> But it is in Zizioulas's later study, "The Doctrine of the Holy Trinity: The Significance of the Cappadocian Contribution,"<sup>39</sup> to which we can turn for a rather more distilled formulation of his reading of the Cappadocians on, among many rich considerations, person as relational and as ultimate reality to be given priority over substance. Here, in basic continuity with his previous studies, Zizioulas writes of his reading of the Cappadocian understanding of person not as individual but as relational reality. By way of example, we can cite one of Zizioulas's conclusions: "For according to it [the thought of the Cappadocian Fathers], true personhood arises not from one's individualistic

isolation from others but from love and relationship with others, from communion."<sup>40</sup> And concerning the priority of person over substance, Zizioulas concludes that "the philosophical scandal of the Trinity can be resolved or accepted only if substance gives way to personhood as the causing principle or *arche* in ontology."<sup>41</sup>

Zizioulas's attributions of the notion of person as relation rather than individual and of the priority of person over substance to the Cappadocians have been challenged by several scholars. Lucian Turcescu,<sup>42</sup> for example, argues rather, with reference to specific texts from Gregory of Nyssa, that person and individual were not so clearly distinguished in Cappadocian thought. He analyses several texts by Gregory in which Gregory thinks of person precisely in terms of individual and concludes that Zizioulas has misrepresented the thought of the Cappadocians when he insists so strongly on a Cappadocian distinction between person and individual.<sup>43</sup> Turcescu speaks as well of Zizioulas's "alleged primacy of the person over substance in Cappadocian theology."<sup>44</sup> We might add that, in a similar vein, James L. Fredericks<sup>45</sup> cites Jaroslav Pelikan to anchor his remarks concerning the inability of the Cappadocians to work out well the relationship between one substance and three hypostases.

Sarah Coakley<sup>46</sup> is a third scholar who has questioned the attribution of a seemingly more modern relational understanding of person to the Cappadocians, but without mentioning Zizioulas specifically until the last lines of her study. She argues that "we 'moderns' have . . . misconstrued Gregory [of Nyssa], reading him only selectively or with an eye to particular theological ends."<sup>47</sup> She notes early on, for example, that Gregory was diffident, to use her word, about exploring at length the nature of God as such.<sup>48</sup> More specifically with regard to Gregory's understanding of person, she examines key texts from Gregory to counter the attribution to him of aspects of the more modern notion of person (often defined in terms of autonomous consciousness) that are usually embraced in social models of Trinity.<sup>49</sup> She corrects ten ways in which she says Gregory has been misinterpreted as a social Trinitarian. Without listing them fully, we can note that for her it is a misinterpretation to say Gregory starts apologetically with three when in fact his apologetic concern is to stress unity at the level of the divine Nature. She clarifies that Gregory starts with the Father as "*one* 'person,' as source and cause of the others."<sup>50</sup> With Gregory there is one divine motion of will, though the Spirit serves as an experiential, again her word, point of entry into that flow. For Gregory there are not three consciousnesses: "A *hypostasis* is simply a distinct enough entity to bear some

'particularizing marks.'"<sup>51</sup> Regarding *hypostasis* and Gregory's more often used *prosopon*, she further remarks that *hypostasis* refers less to relationality, since its technical and delimited meaning in Gregory is what identifies in an individual that which is otherwise more general. She sees this term as applying more literally to Father, Son, and Spirit. As to *prosopon*, she recognizes its "more obviously 'relational' or 'psychological' meaning as visage or personal presentation." But its use would then be considered more as analogical or even metaphorical language.<sup>52</sup> Coakley concludes that in Gregory we see stress on "a unified *flow* of divine will and love." She says we do not find here various versions of the notion of person as relational that one finds especially in trinitarian theology today. She insists that in Gregory there is "not a 'community of individuals'; nor, incidentally, does . . . [Gregory]—on my [Coakley's] reading—*prioritize* 'person' over 'substance' (a matter that has become polemical in the thought of John Zizioulas.)"<sup>53</sup>

Coakley and Turcescu each suggest that Zizioulas has attributed to the Cappadocians modern understandings of person which are apparently not present in any explicit or developed way in their trinitarian thinking.<sup>54</sup> And Fredericks hesitates to state so directly that the Cappadocians gave a clearly expressed ontological priority to person over being or substance.<sup>55</sup> Turcescu goes somewhat beyond this more generally framed overall question of attributing modern understandings of person. He proposes to identify several sources of such modern understandings that may well have influenced Zizioulas and his understanding of person as relational. He points to similarities between the thought of John Macmurray and Martin Buber in this regard, on the one hand, and that of Zizioulas, on the other. He notes that Zizioulas has referred to these two philosophers explicitly. He is of the opinion that they have influenced Zizioulas in his thinking about person.<sup>56</sup> We have already explored possible post-Kantian German Idealist influence on Macmurray and, consequently, through Macmurray on Zizioulas. Turcescu traces back to Feuerbach, Buber's understanding of person, as compared with individuality, in terms of appearance through relation with other persons.<sup>57</sup> And of course this tracing back could easily continue through Feuerbach to Hegel.<sup>58</sup> Again, a likely mediated Hegelian influence on Zizioulas.

Among others hesitant about attributing more recent notions of person to the Cappadocians, there is Alexis Torrance. He critiques what he identifies as twentieth-century attempts at "mapping the concept of personhood onto early Christian sources, an activity pursued in particular (though not exclusively) by Greek Orthodox theologians in the twentieth century." He



criticizes as well the idea that Orthodox personalism really reflects patristic thought.<sup>59</sup> He opens his study with a very helpful introduction to that to which he refers as early twentieth-century personalism. He makes special mention of the French School of personalism and the thinking of Emmanuel Mounier, who was himself almost certainly influenced by Nikolai Berdyaev, a Russian émigré. According to Torrance, it was Mounier, for instance, who early on stressed the antithesis between individual and person.<sup>60</sup> Torrance then notes the complex series of links between the French Personalist School and Eastern Orthodox thinkers, including the Orthodox personalist thinker, Fr. Georges Florovsky.<sup>61</sup> He connects Florovsky with Zizioulas when he notes that "in the realm of personalist theology, his [Florovsky's] most significant contribution was to train the pre-eminent representative of Orthodox personalism active today, Metropolitan John Zizioulas."<sup>62</sup>

Torrance opened his study with a brief overview of early twentieth-century personalism and especially that of the French School. He thus raises the question of the history of the complex relationship, both positive and negative, between post-Kantian German Idealist thought and that of various Orthodox thinkers. I would suggest that Idealist thought is mediated to them, especially to Russian Orthodox thinkers, in a special though not exclusive way through Solovyov. Given then this complex relationship and the challenges to which Zizioulas's interpretation of the Cappadocians on person as relational and as having priority over being, I would like to examine another, perhaps complementary, way of envisioning the relationship of Zizioulas's relational ontology of persons in communion to what the Cappadocians have said, within the context of their trinitarian thought, about person.

Despite his criticism of Zizioulas's reading of the Cappadocians, Turcescu himself had appreciatively noted the creative insight and value of Zizioulas's thought as such.<sup>63</sup> Following upon his appreciative remarks, I think it is reasonable to propose that Zizioulas has in fact proceeded in a quasi-Gadamerian way in developing his relational ontology of persons in communion.<sup>64</sup> It would seem that Zizioulas has, on the one hand, come to the question of the trinitarian notion of person from within his own intellectual horizon, namely, that of the more modern, nineteenth- and twentieth-century understandings of person. On the other hand, he has as well, and critically important, come to realize that the Cappadocians, with their own creative reworking of Greek philosophy within their own intellectual horizon, have in effect posed the question as to how we can think of persons, divine and human, in a fuller way appropriate to our

own contemporary times and concerns.<sup>65</sup> In bringing together these two horizons through dialogue, Zizioulas has, to use Gadamer's term, brought about a fusion of them (*Horizontverschmelzung*). I suggest we could consider these moves, especially here on the part of Zizioulas, as an example of what Gadamer calls history of effect (*Wirkungsgeschichte*) and consciousness of being affected by history (*wirkungsgeschichtliches Bewußtsein*).<sup>66</sup> In the process, Zizioulas has created something new and exciting, namely, his own relational ontology of persons in communion. And in so doing, he has mediated to LaCugna an understanding of person further developed out of, but beyond, what both the post-Kantian German Idealists themselves and the Cappadocians had proposed.<sup>67</sup>

We can, then, hear various echoes of Idealist trinitarian thought from within that of LaCugna. Indeed, more generally speaking she was sensitive to Idealist-influenced personalist thought as such. And she herself acknowledged the overall Idealist understanding of person as relational. But those echoes sound more clearly and distinctly when we listen carefully to what she has to say while discussing the thought of Rahner, Macmurray, and Zizioulas. Each of these three has creatively reworked various post-Kantian German Idealist trinitarian insights and in this way mediated them to her. These insights include the identification of immanent and economic Trinity, the notion of person as relational and, we could add, agent, and person as the ultimate form of reality, which last is then essentially a movement of communion. In turn, while with these insights witnessing to the Idealist trinitarian legacy, she has in her own rather forceful way brought them together. But she has done this now with a sound distinctly her own: "God for Us."



## Joseph A. Bracken

### *A Panentheistic Process Trinitarian Society*

Joseph A. Bracken, S.J., (1930– ) is “one of the more significant North American theologians of the past forty years,”<sup>1</sup> and certainly the most important contemporary Catholic process theologian and philosopher.<sup>2</sup> He wrote his 1968 PhD dissertation in philosophy, “Freiheit: Wesen und Wirklichkeit” (“Freedom: Essence and Actuality”) for the University of Freiburg, Germany, under the direction of his *Doctor-Vater*, the phenomenologist Eugen Fink. He published a revised version of his dissertation as *Freiheit und Kausalität bei Schelling* (*Freedom and Causality in Schelling’s Thought*) in 1972.<sup>3</sup> He taught philosophy and philosophical theology at St. Mary of the Lake Seminary in Mundelein, Illinois, from 1968 to 1974. He then became a member of the Theology Department of Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and was named Chair of the Theology Department of Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio, from 1982 to 1985. He taught for the rest of his career at Xavier, where he was the first occupant of the Beckman Family Chair in Roman Catholic Theology from 1989 to 1992 and served as Director of the Brueggeman Center for Interreligious Dialogue from 1999 to 2003. He is Emeritus Professor of Theology and Director Emeritus of the Brueggeman Center. Throughout these years Bracken has continued to develop his understanding of the relationship between the one and the many in trinitarian terms. Marc A. Pugliese calls him “a shining example of the longstanding Catholic approach of grappling with the best philosophy at a given point in history.”<sup>4</sup> Brandon Gallaher captures the essence of what Bracken has to say when, concerning Bracken, he writes that his “most important contribution

to modern theology is his creative and systematic utilization, as well as thorough revision, of Whiteheadian process relational metaphysics in the service of a trinitarian vision of the God-world relationship.”<sup>5</sup>

We will be particularly interested in seeing how post-Kantian German Idealist thinkers, Schelling and Hegel in particular, have influenced Bracken as he works out a trinitarian revision of Whiteheadian metaphysics. By way of preliminary remark, we can note that he draws on Schelling whose thought he works with to reinforce Whitehead's notion of the free, self-determining subject. He calls upon Hegel's idea of objective spirit to strengthen the ontological status of the whole, namely, society and, consequently, to attribute a stronger notion of formal causality to Whitehead's notion of a society. He picks up on Schelling's insight into the nature of ground as pre-rational, transforming it into his enriched understanding of society as a field arising out of the interaction of con-creating subjects.

### Bracken on Trinity and the God-World Relationship

Bracken wrote explicitly on Trinity at least as far back as 1974 when he published two articles, “The Holy Trinity as a Community of Divine Persons I, II.” There, from the very beginning, he describes what will become his guiding concern throughout his career-long project. “In these articles a fresh attempt will be made to describe the Trinity as a society of persons. The basic hypothesis will be that the three divine Persons are one God in virtue of their unity-in-community.”<sup>6</sup> For the next forty or so years he has continued to pursue this interest in Trinity and its relevance for a wide range of philosophical and theological questions.<sup>7</sup> Among his earlier works, in addition to a series of articles we should note his review of then-recent work on Trinity, *What Are They Saying about the Trinity?*<sup>8</sup> In the epilogue<sup>9</sup> he stresses the contemporary need for community and the need to consider Trinity “within a broader systematic frame of reference”—hence the importance of process theology along Whiteheadian, though not exclusively Whiteheadian, lines. He draws attention in the epilogue as well to Josiah Royce's *The Problem of Christianity*, first published in 1913. In 1985 he produced a longer study, *The Triune Symbol: Persons, Process and Community*, based on texts presented in the classroom in order to test whether what he said reverberated with the experience of others.<sup>10</sup>

Over the following decades Bracken pursued his trinitarian interests in relation to numerous points of great theological and philosophical import as

he developed his own broader systematic, indeed cosmological, framework. By way of example, we can mention several of his books. Citing them gives an idea of the scope of his wide-ranging interests and provides the occasion to note an impressive, representative listing of those with whom he enters into critical and constructive dialogue as he develops his own thought. For example, his 1995 text, *The Divine Matrix: Creativity as Link between East and West*,<sup>11</sup> is a book on Trinity in the context of world religions and represents, in part, the fruit of a sabbatical in India.<sup>12</sup> In it he works with Aristotle, Aquinas, Eckhart, Schelling, Heidegger, and Whitehead, on the one hand, and Hindu, Buddhist, and Taoist thought, on the other. His 2001 book, *The One in the Many: A Contemporary Reconstruction of the God-World Relationship*, is, among other contributions, an effort to “set forth the basic outline of a process-oriented metaphysics based on . . . the logic of inter-subjectivity.”<sup>13</sup> Here he explores and builds upon the ideas of such diverse thinkers as Robert Neville, David Ray Griffin, William Desmond, Jacques Derrida, Ervin Laszlo, Jürgen Habermas, Bernard J. Lonergan, Alfred North Whitehead, Colin E. Gunton, Kitaro Nishida, and Jorge Nobo. In his 2006 work, *Christianity and Process Thought: Spirituality for a Changing World*, Bracken draws out implications of his trinitarian cosmology for a richer understanding of the spiritual relationship of all of creation with the Trinity in an inclusive cosmic community.<sup>14</sup> As appropriate in a book with a spiritual focus, he has tested out in his preaching various aspects of his thought and received, as he indicates, a positive reaction to much of what he wrote here and elsewhere.<sup>15</sup>

Among these and his many other important works, we will focus primarily on his 1991 study, *Society and Spirit: A Trinitarian Cosmology*.<sup>16</sup> In this volume he refers at length to, and in effect summarizes and further develops, what he had said in his earlier work, *The Triune Symbol*. In a postscript to this latter volume Bracken notes he realized only after its writing “that a Whiteheadian society is perhaps best understood as a unified field of activity for its constituent actual entities,” a remark he confirms in *Society and Spirit*.<sup>17</sup> It is here in *Society and Spirit* that he lays out at greater length his argument in favor of his major insight into Trinity as a dynamic society which is a field of activity of mutually interacting divine Persons or subjects. Of particular interest, he carries out his argument by means of explicit reference to specific thinkers including, among so many others, Schelling and Hegel, with whom he enters into critical and constructive dialogue. It is in this volume that we see him laying a strong foundation for his later work.<sup>18</sup>

We can get an initial handle on the overall position Bracken will develop in *Society and Spirit* by referring briefly to his opening remarks in the preface. There he announces that his intention in part 1, "Society," and especially in chapter 1 is to develop a Whitehead-based but significantly extended philosophical cosmology constructed in terms of "a Whiteheadian notion of a society as a preconstituted 'environment' or patterned field of activity for the emergence of successive generations of 'actual occasions'" (14).<sup>19</sup> In part 2, entitled "Spirit," Bracken develops the more European philosophical notion of spirit in dialogue with, among others, Whitehead's notion of actual occasion. As he writes, "I will probe the affinities between Whitehead's thought and that of two great German Idealists, namely, Schelling and Hegel, who were themselves in every sense of the word cosmologists" (14). In the book's part 3, "Society and Spirit," he sketches out his panentheistic trinitarian understanding of the God-world relationship in which the three divine Persons and creatures "co-constitute a cosmic society that is in the final analysis Ultimate Reality" (15).

In the introduction, entitled "Being—Object of Thought or Subject of Experience?," Bracken carries out a quick review of the history of philosophy. He does this in line with, but critical of, the way in which Heidegger had taken this path as well. In a selective review of remarks made in the introduction, we can say that, for Bracken, up until Descartes being was considered in relation to form and thus, in effect, in terms of thought. Descartes shifted concern to the human subject.<sup>20</sup> The post-Kantian German Idealists brought in a cosmological consideration in regard to human subjectivity. Fichte stressed the synthesizing activity of the preconscious transcendental ego, Schelling underlying reality as pure activity, and Hegel the logical structure of all of reality (27–29). But it was Whitehead who brought "being" back into the picture more explicitly when he spoke of all that is, whether prehuman, human, or divine, as movements of subjectivity. Heidegger had proposed the end of philosophy, meaning the end of metaphysics, but did not truly provide an alternative to what he critiqued. It was Whitehead who proposed, in metaphorical phrasing, a metaphysics of becoming (32–34). Bracken then turns in part 1 to the notion of society and says that "in part two of the book, I will elaborate my understanding of spirit in heavy dependence upon the German Idealists, Schelling and Hegel" (35). He reminds the reader that in part 3 he will bring together the notions of society and spirit in a new, panentheistic divine-human cosmic society.

Part 1, "Society," consists of three chapters, from which we will, especially in referring to chapters 1 and 2, distill elements of his thought more

directly pertinent to our understanding of his constructive reflection. This constructive reflection itself will be found especially in part 3, where he will reflect on the God-world relationship conceived in trinitarian terms. In chapter 1 Bracken presents his further development of Whitehead's notion of society, which he will in chapter 2 interpret as a field and in chapter 3 relate to developments in chemistry and biology.

In chapter 1, entitled "Substance—Society—Natural System," Bracken begins with a longer discussion of the Whiteheadian notion of a society, which for present purposes we can simply understand as "any non-random grouping or 'nexus' of actual entities which perdures through time and is governed by a *common element of form*."<sup>21</sup> He reviews the critique of that notion by the eminent philosopher of nature Ivor Leclerc,<sup>22</sup> who prefers to work with the more Aristotelian notion of substance as basic cosmological category. Bracken agrees with Leclerc that the idea of society is underdeveloped in Whitehead's thought. But he argues that, rather than abandoning that idea, we should suitably modify it so it will serve as a better basic cosmological category than substance. Society accounts for what substance refers to but substance cannot do the same for society (39). Bracken proposes that we see a society, constituted ultimately by actual occasions or movements of self-determining subjectivity, as explanation of what we experience at the level of various things from molecules and cells on up to humans and their communities. Of particular importance is his insistence that for Whitehead societies are more than mere aggregates of actual occasions. Whitehead himself seems in his later thought to have moved toward attributing some form of agency to a society, though he usually insists that the only true agency, in this case causal efficacy,<sup>23</sup> belongs only to actual occasions (43). Bracken proposes that we see societies as exercising another form of agency, that is, an agency in and through each of the actual occasions which constitute them. For him a society exercises agency not in the way an actual occasion does, namely, through decision but in a collective agency "proper to a society acting in and through its constituent occasions" (44, also 43, 45, 49).

Bracken continues his further development of Whitehead's notion of a society by entering into critical dialogue with, among others, the cosmologist Ervin Laszlo (49–52),<sup>24</sup> and the philosopher Edward Pols (52–55).<sup>25</sup> He picks up on Laszlo's idea of natural system and Pols's notion of originaive act (55). He appreciates the fact that Laszlo sees his own idea of natural system, akin in many ways to Whitehead's notion of society, as applicable to both organic compounds and "specifically social groups of otherwise



relatively self-sufficient entities (for example, human communities and ecological or environmental systems)" (50). With Laszlo, Bracken finds that the common element of form arises out of the interaction of constituent members at any given level in the natural system or, in the Whiteheadian term Bracken prefers, society. In this way he can with Whitehead affirm causal efficacy attributable to actual occasions and, with Laszlo, a type of formal causality attributable to societies. He then brings this consideration of society to a close by referring briefly to Pols's notion of origivative act. Bracken recalls that Pols bases his understanding of agency on his interpretation of Socrates who, by free decision, decided to end his life. With this example Pols is rejecting the explanations of human actions either as mere interactions of subatomic particles or as actions regulated by laws appropriate to the level of action. In effect Pols rejects the deterministic character of each of these two possible explanations of human action. But, whereas in Pols's more Aristotelian approach form is active in relation to matter, for Bracken form is passive, arising out of the individual decisions of the constituent actual occasions (54). As so modified, for Bracken Pols's stress on the role of the origivative act helps us appreciate Bracken's own now modified, or better, further developed Whiteheadian understanding of a society. In that understand, a society as such exercises agency through its constituent actual occasions, each of which makes its own a common element of form, resulting in a true societal "collective agency emergent out of the 'sub-acts' of its constituent parts" (52).<sup>26</sup> This common element of form does not exist apart from the actual occasions. While coming and ceasing to be with the actual occasions, it constitutes a "necessary context or environment for the coming and ceasing to be of subsequent actual occasions (55)."<sup>27</sup> As we come to the end of our review of selected aspects of Bracken's argument in this first chapter, it is helpful to recall Bracken's reminder of where he is going in further chapters. "I . . . hold that the material universe is a structured society that is itself included within the Trinitarian society of the three divine persons. Thus the ultimate ontological reality is a society" (49).

In chapter 2, "Energy-Events and Fields," and in chapter 3, "Entropy and Dissipative Structures," Bracken further develops his cosmology or systematically worked-out comprehensive philosophical analysis of reality at the levels, respectively, of physics and then chemistry and biology. He does this by considering representative questions raised at these various levels and responding to them in light of his neo-Whiteheadian understanding of society as a field of activity. He addresses these questions in order to draw

out further aspects of that understanding and to indicate the compatibility between his neo-Whiteheadian understanding and that of those working more directly in physics, chemistry, and biology.

Of particular interest to us in chapter 2 is Bracken's view of field as developed in physics, a view he sees as giving further content to his neo-Whiteheadian view of society. At the level of physics, he sees reality in terms of fields within which actual occasions act. Bracken asks physical scientists to consider what they call localized energy-events as, to use his own Whiteheadian term, actual occasions, namely, acts of experience considered as the fundamental philosophical and even metaphysical actualities (58). We can rather loosely paraphrase aspects of Bracken's tightly phrased presentation by noting that these acts of experience are moments of becoming or concrescence. In these moments the subject coming into being prehends, feels in effect, that which has come before it. Whitehead envisions the nontemporal succession of feelings in the concrescing actual occasion not as chaotic but as taking place in a series of orderly nontemporal phases, the description of which we can leave aside except to mention the final phase. This final phase Whitehead calls satisfaction and describes as one complex, fully determinate feeling. It is the result of the fact that the actual occasion has made an implicit decision as to what to include positively (and negatively) in its coming into being. At the end of this process of concrescence the actual occasion ceases to exist but presents itself to the next actual occasion as part of what is to be prehended by that actual occasion. Whitehead refers, in this respect, to this final phase as superject. Bracken underscores the idea that concrescing subjects prehend waves of energy from the field within which they occur and release that energy back into the field. Actual occasions, energy-events, assure there is continuity and subtle change within the field (69). In referring to actual occasions as waves of energy, Bracken has found a way to respond to one of the fundamental questions in physics, namely, the "wavelike and particlelike behavior of electrons and other sub-atomic entities" (57). For him, this Whiteheadian understanding of actual occasions provides the best philosophical approach to understanding wavelike and particlelike behavior. "Actual occasions, immaterial subjects of experience . . . are objectified now as wave lengths of energy, now as particulate matter" (87).

It will be helpful to bring forward several aspects of Bracken's own notion of field, which Bracken says further concretizes that to which Whitehead is in fact referring when he speaks of a society. He introduces the Whiteheadian notion of an "'extensive continuum,' the all-embracing

field of relationships for actual occasions past, present, and future" (59). He proposes that his notion of field is applicable to and helpful in understanding both microscopic and macroscopic levels of reality from subatomic particles on up to environments and even human societies. They function as subsocieties, "subordinate fields of activity within the all-comprehensive field of the extensive continuum" (60). Societies, as previously presented in chapter 1 and now as fields, are constituted by the common element of form arising in and through the concreting actual occasions. Societies arise not only at the subatomic level but even at the level of complex organisms. "Social realities, such as communities and environments" can be described as societies, indeed fields. They can be so described because the fundamental interrelatedness of constituent members explains well both continuity and novelty within them. It explains continuity in that the constituent members, whether actual occasions or subset societies, generally reproduce the form common to the society or field. It explains novelty because actual occasions, through their decisions, bring about modification of the common form (69–72). In chapter 2 Bracken has argued that notion of field of activity will serve well as a basic notion that can be used in developing a new cosmology (73).

Bracken continues his treatment of field at the levels of chemistry and biology in chapter 3, there insightfully arguing to the usefulness of the notion of field particularly at these levels. He works his way through complex questions such as the possibility of newness and greater complexity arising in a universe characterized by entropy (74, 79–80). He comes down firmly on the side of the inevitable irreversibility of time, given the process of becoming and perishing of actual occasions (84–85, 87). For present purposes, however, we will move directly to "Spirit," part 2 of *Society and Spirit*. There he continues to flesh out, to put it in very basic form, his understanding of actual occasion in relation to Schelling's notion of freedom and of society as field of activity in relation to Hegel's thought on more complex forms of human social organization. He summarizes the way in which he will proceed: "In chapter 4, I will use the philosophy of Schelling to inquire into the reality of subjective spirit as the power of radical self-constitution. Chapter 5 will deal with Hegel's notion of objective spirit as embodied in progressively more comprehensive structures or intelligible patterns. Undergirding these forays into the history of philosophy, of course, will be the neo-Whiteheadian scheme that I have already elaborated" (88).<sup>28</sup>

Chapter 4 can be seen as proceeding in several steps identifiable in various ways. Among these ways I propose that we consider the chapter as

consisting in three sequentially distinguishable, though interrelated, discussions. In the first of these discussions Bracken enters into critical review of Schelling's thought on the notions of freedom and ground (91–98). With his own doctoral dissertation, published as *Kausalität und Freiheit bei Schelling* (*Causality and Freedom in Schelling's Thought*) in the background, he enters into critical conversation with Heidegger concerning the way in which Heidegger<sup>29</sup> reads Schelling on these notions. He will then bring Whitehead more explicitly into the conversation. But for now he picks up on four points Heidegger makes regarding the thought of Schelling in his 1809 *Freiheitsschrift* (*Of Human Freedom*),<sup>30</sup> with the first three of which he agrees. Schelling was the first to see the importance of the question of how to handle the notion of freedom within, as Bracken puts it, a wider systematic understanding of reality. Second, Schelling understood the phrase "God is all," not in terms of simple identity but as "the expression of a Ground-Consequent (*Grund/Folge*) relationship whereby God is the ground of everything else that exists." Individuals have their grounding in God but are equally independent and autonomous. Third, Ground requires no ground. In fact, Schelling proposes a free act outside of time as itself the only reason for a primordial free choice for evil. So, in both God and humans Ground and Existence are related, we should add, by free act of will: "Ground within the Godhead is a prerational desire or striving for self-expression. Existence, on the other hand, within the divine consciousness as within human consciousness, is a rational will (*Wille des Verstandes*) that opposes itself to the prerational will of the Ground and thereby paradoxically generates the unity of the divine consciousness, namely, God as Spirit" (93, see 92–93).

In a fourth point, Heidegger disagrees with Schelling concerning the need to consider freedom within a wider, rational system. For Heidegger God is not needed as ground for the dialectical functioning of human consciousness. But for his part Bracken disagrees with Heidegger regarding the way in which Heidegger seems to be interpreting Schelling's distinction between Ground and Existence as an earlier equivalent to his own distinction between Being and beings. According to Bracken, Heidegger's interpretation misses the basic point that for Schelling the real ground, with a small "g," for human existence is not Schelling's Ground with a capital "G" but the sheer free act of self-determination, which occurs not outside time but time and again in reality. With this subtle shift in the meaning of Ground/ground we see in effect Bracken's being guided by Whitehead and his notion of actual occasion as self-determining movement of subjectivity (95 with 97).

In the second of three discernibly distinguishable discussions, Bracken works with Wolfgang Wieland, who is himself influenced by Heidegger's understanding of time when he interprets Schelling on time, especially in Schelling's 1811 and 1813 *Weltalter* manuscripts (98–101).<sup>31</sup> The essential point Bracken makes here is that, in line with what Wieland says, for Schelling the human being is the very act itself by which in free decision the human makes a break with the past. But Bracken argues that Wieland did “not move logically from the self-constituting free decision to an underlying power of decision-making as its ontological source or ground.” Perhaps, Bracken observes, among various considerations Wieland simply followed his mentor, Heidegger, in trying to avoid presupposing an underlying subject who takes the decision. He did not have at his disposal a process-based conceptuality such as that developed by Whitehead. So it would seem he remained with the interplay between Ground and Existence without going deeper into the idea of free self-determination. For Bracken, Schelling and Whitehead both, though less clearly for Schelling, hold that “human subjectivity is grounded . . . in its own power of radical self-constitution” (101).

Bracken concludes the fourth chapter with a brief reference (104) to Wolfhart Pannenberg and the latter's distinction between, and unity of, ego and self.<sup>32</sup> Pannenberg cites Fichte as the first to try to think through this unity. Pannenberg himself, and Bracken in agreement with him, holds that “the ego or the momentary subject of experience is basically a power of synthesis issuing in a decision that ends the process of self-constitution for this moment.” What the ego synthesizes is, among other factors, its own previous self. For Bracken, however, in line with Whitehead the ego is not conscious of itself in this process of synthesizing while the process is occurring. It is only conscious “of the self of the immediately preceding moment from which it is here and now distinguishing itself” (102). Pannenberg goes on to describe “person” as the presence of the self in the ego, a form of anticipatory consciousness. Person seems to describe the commonsense experience of self-consciousness. For Pannenberg person is a synthesis of past, present, and future while for Whitehead “temporal consciousness . . . [is] a personally ordered society of actual occasions [that] yields the same results” (103). In both cases there is a “temporal thickness and a developmental teleology” (103). Bracken then stresses the similarity between Pannenberg's notion of the ego and Whitehead's notion of an actual occasion. Both are acts of radical self-determination and, with Bracken's further precision, conscious of their past self but unconscious in present decision-making. Bracken closes the chapter, saying that it is important to identify the ego

as in itself preconscious so we may distinguish between subjective spirit or subjectivity and consciousness. "Spirit and consciousness are not synonymous. A measure of spirit is to be found in every actual occasion and in every society to which it belongs, whether that society be the reality of an atom or the reality of a highly complex animal organism such as a human being" (104). With Schelling and Whitehead, Bracken here sees spirit as the immanent capacity for self-determination.

In chapter 5 Bracken develops his own understanding of objective spirit as structured fields of activity. He takes the term "objective spirit" from Hegel who, with this term, referred to the moment in the movement of spirit where he treated philosophically of, as Bracken states it, such themes as right, morality, and ethical life. However, Bracken works with the notion of objective spirit as such, namely, the "realm of intersubjectivity insofar as the latter is incarnated in progressively more comprehensive and structured fields of activity between human beings as (at least implicit) members of a social whole or society" (105). He works out his understanding of objective spirit by, to capture some of his own words, comparing, contrasting, and treating as complementary, mutually corrective, and compensatory Hegel's notion of spirit, particularly objective spirit, and Whitehead's notion of society (106, 118–19).

Compare, contrast, and complement. Though throughout chapter 5 Bracken interweaves these three approaches to Hegel's and Whitehead's thought, we can profitably gather his remarks by starting with his first approach in which he compares what he sees as similarities in their thought. For Bracken the basic similarity justifying examining together Hegel on objective spirit and Whitehead on society is the fact that both insist the whole is greater than the mere sum of its parts. Hegel and Whitehead are each working in their own ways with the question of the one and the many (106, 109, 110).

In his wider presentation of the dialectically developing movement of spirit, Hegel seems to imply some form of presence of spirit already at a preconscious level in the realm of nature, given the organizing activity of the concept in this realm. So even there the functioning of an organic totality witnesses to the presence of spirit in some form or other. Bracken reviews various moments in the movement of Hegel's philosophy of nature to confirm this insight that spirit is inchoatively present. He notes that for Hegel nature exhibits progressively more complex organic totalities in which spirit is unconsciously present (106–09). Whitehead in turn speaks of a society, at any level from that of a subatomic particle to that of a human

being, whose members share a common element of form. So a society is in some way an actuality in its own right and "a structured whole that is more than the sum of its constituent actual occasions" (109). Despite some ambiguities, Whitehead too holds that societies are "their own reason" and "self-sustaining." A society "possesses an objective unity that is reflected in the self-constitution of its constituent actual occasions" (110).

Bracken's second approach consists in contrasting Hegel on objective spirit and Whitehead on society to bring out certain differences between them that are more relevant to Bracken's own project. Among them, Bracken first notes for example Hegel's consideration of intersubjectivity only in regard to finite conscious humans whereas Whitehead argues that all actual occasions at any level are subjects of experience (105). Again, for Hegel the whole is the result of a "predetermined structure or form of intelligibility" whereas for Whitehead it "emerge[s] out of the dynamic interaction of its constituent parts or members" (110). For Hegel, a preexistent unity shapes the material elements while for Whitehead form arises out of the interaction of actual occasions moment-by-moment. Whitehead then stresses the interaction of form and matter more than Hegel does. Thus Whitehead and Hegel differ in the way in which they envision the relationship between the one and the many.

In his third approach, namely, stressing complementarity, Bracken presents his understanding of objective spirit as a synthesis and mediating position between those of Hegel and Whitehead (112, 119). With Hegel he holds that totalities are not just aggregates. They are immanently self-organized elements forming "an intelligible whole or structured field of activity." With Whitehead he maintains that material elements are "momentary subjects of experience" which in interaction produce the element of form, "the objective intelligibility, which gives them their unity as a society or structured field of activity." Bracken then defines objective spirit as "the realm of intersubjectivity insofar as the latter is incarnated in progressively more comprehensive and structured fields of activity for momentary subjects of experience" (113). In seeing all of reality as moments of experience, he understands all levels of reality as acts of subjective spirit due to their power of self-constitution.

Bracken continues his consideration of Hegel and Whitehead as complementary when he draws attention to Hegel's more developed presentation of increasingly complex intersubjective totalities such as those of the family, civil society, and the ideal state. With particular reference to the state, according to Bracken Hegel sees it as a single organism of interrelated

parts. Whitehead envisions it as a “structured society or complex field of activity for its citizens.” Hegel’s strength lies in his stressing the state’s in a sense distinct unity, but this brings with it the danger of totalitarianism. Whitehead’s strength rests in his ability to see the state arising out of the interaction, competitive or harmonious, of groups and even individuals. While Whitehead seems to restrict the possibility of attributing agency to societies, Bracken argues for a societal agency “that flows out of a series of decisions” (116–17). In this regard he says that Hegel can be seen as correcting Whitehead concerning family life, civil society, and the state in that he more clearly speaks of an agency proper to them. And Whitehead corrects Hegel by providing a way to expand subjective spirit to all levels of reality (118–19). As Bracken concludes, “I have developed a notion of objective spirit that is partly of Hegelian and partly of Whiteheadian inspiration” (118).

It is in dialogue then with a carefully selected series of discussion partners that Bracken has worked out his notions of society and of spirit. And he has structured his presentation of these discussions in *Society and Spirit* in three sequentially ordered parts: “Society”; “Spirit”; “Society and Spirit.” We can hardly resist noting that this tripartite structure itself seems to echo the threefold focus of dynamically developing German Idealist thought. Now in part 3, “Society and Spirit,” he is ready to bring the two ideas, society and spirit, together to introduce a new way of envisioning the God-world relationship (123). Part 3 consists of chapter 6, “The Triune God,” and chapter 7, “The Cosmic Society.” We will consider various aspects of Bracken’s thought in each of these two chapters, but especially in chapter 6. We will do this from the perspective of our overall interest in identifying post-Kantian German Idealist influences on Bracken’s trinitarian thought. In this very clearly presented chapter 6, Bracken summarizes what he had said earlier in *The Triune Symbol* concerning Trinity as a community of three divine persons. He then further develops that trinitarian thought in light of his major or, as he says, key insight in the present volume, namely, that Whitehead’s notion of a society can well be understood as a field of activity (124 with 129).<sup>33</sup> He opens the chapter with an indication of his profound conviction that the only satisfactory way to come to a truly panentheistic understanding of the relationship between God and world is to do this by understanding God in a field-oriented approach (123). For a really panentheistic understanding of the relationship will require that finite reality exists and functions autonomously in perduring fashion within a wider, englobing divine field.



Bracken then provides, as mentioned, a dense summary (124–29) of his view of God as a community of divine persons, which view he had previously spelled out in his 1985 volume, *The Triune Symbol*. There he had drawn on Whitehead and, of note, on Josiah Royce as he embraced a social conception of God.<sup>34</sup> Though he no longer refers to Royce in *Society and Spirit*, it would seem that this earlier Roycean influence remains with him, at least in the background, in his further reflection on Trinity and the God-world relationship. He continues to carry on this reflection throughout his further research and writing beyond *Society and Spirit*. In contradistinction to Whitehead, who had considered God as a single, ever-concrescing actual entity, and Hartshorne, who conceived of God as a personally ordered society of actual occasions, Bracken proposes that God be understood as three divine Persons. Each of them, to put it technically, is a “personally ordered society of occasions . . . one God . . . [as] the unity of a Whiteheadian structured society or society of subsocieties.” Through their interactions the three divine persons co-constitute their unity as God. Bracken sums up these interactions in the following model:

At every instant God the “Father” proposes to the divine “Son” a possibility for their co-existence as a community of divine persons. The “Son” in that same instant responds invariably (but still freely) to the proposal of the “Father” with an unequivocal yes. The third person of the Trinity, the divine Spirit, is simultaneously active in this dialogue between the “Father” and the “Son,” prompting the “Father” to offer and the “Son” to respond. As a result, their continued coexistence as a community is necessarily dependent upon the ongoing cooperation of all three divine persons. (124)

Working with Whitehead's overall construction of God as bipolar in nature, namely, primordial and consequent, as well as with Whitehead's notion of creativity, Bracken spells out more precisely the roles of each of the divine Persons.<sup>35</sup> He sees the Father as providing initial aims, in Whitehead proposed by God in God's primordial nature, to finite actual occasions which respond in their own ways. In this view, finite reality retains its own autonomy as appropriate to true panentheism. This way of functioning is appropriate to the Father who in each instant provides the equivalent of an initial aim to the Son in the power of the Spirit (125). The Son, in turn, is associated with humankind as its head and with all of creation. The Son responds to the Father and serves as the focal point of the responses of

each concreting actual occasion to the initial aims provided by the Father. Whereas with Whitehead the actual occasions are unified in the consequent nature of God, for Bracken they form a cosmic society with the Son in the Son's ongoing response to the Father. So created reality remains a "semiautonomous reality governed by its own laws and patterns of activity" while being, through the Son, a "participant in the communitarian life of the three divine persons, the ultimate society." The Spirit is the mediating principle in the model according to which the Father proposes and the Son responds, thus justifying seeing the Spirit in a similar role "in the relation to creation as a whole and each finite occasion in particular to the 'Father' and the Son.'" To capture Bracken's terminology, we can say that the Spirit prompts the Father to offer initial aims to concreting occasions and prompts them to unite their responses to these initial aims with the continuing response of the Son to the Father. The Spirit is "creative and vivifying principle" in creation and especially in humans "even as the Spirit is the effective vivifying principle within the Godhead" (126).

Bracken wraps up this summary of the roles of Father, Son, and Spirit, as he had described them in *The Triune Symbol*, first by presenting a diagram of three circles, two on the bottom and one on the top forming a triangle. The left-hand bottom circle represents the Father, the right-hand bottom circle the Son, and the top, mediating circle the Spirit. The circle representing the Son contains two circles within it, one encompassing the other. The innermost circle stands for the human community and the larger circle containing the innermost circle signifies creation. Bracken admits that with this two-dimensional diagram he is not able to represent the way in which concreting actual occasions "interpenetrate without losing their own standpoint or identity" (127). He then closes this summary with a further clarification. In his neo-Whiteheadian view, creativity is not just, as in Whitehead, that which powers "the subjective unification of actual occasions," but also "the power of divine intersubjectivity" (127, 128). For the reality of the divine persons as a succession of actual occasions and their objective unity as a structured society are rooted in and powered by one and the same creativity. Finally, the Father then communicates to each actual occasion not only initial aims but also the energy of creativity as a share in the divine being. In this way, "in virtue of Creativity they [actual entities] constitute societies of various kinds up to and including the all-embracing society or community of the three divine persons" (129).

In the rest of chapter 6 Bracken rethinks his trinitarian scheme in view of his now more developed understanding of Whiteheadian societies as structured fields of intentional activity (129–39). The divine Persons are to

be understood as subsistent fields giving rise through their interaction to a common field identified with the extensive continuum. Each divine occasion is transient, so each divine Person is a society as a structured field, namely, an ongoing nontemporal succession of occasions. It is the field which endures, not the occasion (129–30). Each divine Person prehends its past occasions as well as those of the other divine Persons, though each prehends its own subjectivity more completely than that of the others. Each Person fully understands the subjectivity of the other Persons while maintaining its own subjective identity “within the field of intentional activity common to them all, which is their reality as one God” (130). This unbounded field is identified with what Whitehead calls the extensive continuum and constitutes, with creativity, the underlying nature of the triune God. Bracken refers to the extensive continuum as a receptacle for actual occasions in their actualization within their own space-time continuum and the divine communitarian life. Yet this extensive continuum, the field common to the three divine Persons, is not limited to a present epoch. It includes past, present, and future, as well as all possible worlds. It, and we could say consequently the triune God, is the “*wherein* of all becoming” (131).

Bracken picks up again on and underscores his understanding of extensive continuum and creativity as co-constituting “first the ground of their [the three divine Persons’] own divine being and then by extension or participation the ground of all created entities” (131). He returns as well to his description in *The Triune Symbol* of the ways in which Father, Son, and Spirit are respectively brought in line with Whitehead’s way of conceiving God in terms of primordial nature, consequent nature, and superject. “The Spirit . . . appears to be the hypostatized ‘Superject’ of the ongoing relationship between the ‘Father’ as representing pure potentiality and the ‘Son’ together with all creatures as representing actuality here and now” (133). He continues this overall line of thought now, however, more specifically with reference to his identification of extensive continuum and creativity with the underlying nature of the triune God. The Father stands associated with the “field of possibilities that constitute the extensive continuum” and the Son with the space-time continuum which “is a partial actualization of the full reality of the ‘Son’ within the divine community.” The Spirit can continue to be identified with creativity as dynamic principle actualizing the extensive continuum. Bracken prolongs his reflections on the triune God, now understood as a society or field, by bringing together ways in which the three divine Persons are one God. They all pervade the extensive continuum and are “affected by events taking place within the space-time

continuum." All are energized by the principle of creativity in relation to themselves and all actual occasions. "They co-constitute the objective unity of a single structured society or divine field of activity" (134).

At the end of the chapter Bracken returns to the question of true panentheism, saying that with Whitehead, and to some extent Hartshorne as well, ultimately finite occasions do not perdure but perish. It would seem that Whitehead in particular may still be unconsciously thinking of God as a transcendent Substance. For both Whitehead and Hartshorne only God finally survives. In comparison, Bracken says that in his own neo-Whiteheadian view finite occasions retain their ontological independence within the embrace of the divine field constituted by the interaction of the three divine Persons. Divine occasions impact on creation's field. And finite occasions in turn, in a less significant way, affect the activity of the divine occasions. They all share a common field, a sort of place, where they influence one another while retaining their identity. "Within the framework of a field occasions of various kinds can co-exist and produce a common effect" (137, see 136–37).

In chapter 7 Bracken further develops his thought on Trinity, expressing it now more in terms of the God-world relationship as he responds to several questions concerning various aspects of that relationship. Throughout the book and indeed here as well he handles these questions in a variety of ways or even combinations of ways. At times he indicates agreement with the thought of a specific writer, at other times he details an at least partial disagreement with that thought. He then typically appeals to his notion of field, using it to expand on, supplement or even at times correct such thought. Here we will focus more on the first of the questions he addresses, namely, the idea of immortality. He works with the distinction, to put it colloquially, between objective immortality as God remembering us and subjective immortality as us remembering God and others. He recalls that Whitehead affirmed objective immortality, with God prehending all actual occasions in their actualization. But Bracken argues that this still does not permit a full or true panentheism since the actual occasions cease to exist. Their subjectivity as such perishes (141–43). He then refers to David Griffin and Marjorie Suchocki,<sup>36</sup> who in developing their thought within Whitehead's overall process philosophy have each in their own way argued to some form of subjective immortality.

Bracken works primarily with Suchocki's modification to Whitehead's presentation of the last phases of the concreting actual occasion. This modification permits Suchocki to affirm subjective immortality on the part of

finite occasions within the consequent nature of God. She takes a close look at Whitehead's analysis of the completion of the concrescing actual occasion and makes a further distinction there. Bracken summarizes Suchocki's move as follows: "Whereas Whitehead stipulated that each occasion is first a subject of experience and then a superject for later occasions, Suchocki suggests that intermediate between these two phases of existence is *enjoyment* where the occasion is a determinate actuality and thus capable of prehension by God and yet still a subject of experience enjoying the completion of this process of concrescence" (143). With this distinction Suchocki can now say that finite occasions continue their subjectivity, and all that implies, in their being prehended in their entirety by God. God prehends this moment of enjoyment. Finite occasionsprehend God and, in and through God, all other finite occasions. Bracken embraces this insight of Suchocki, especially because it allows for God toprehend the subjectivity, whether unconscious, conscious, or self-conscious, of all finite occasions and not just those of humans. Since finite occasionsprehend all in and through God, there is never the danger of some sort of eternal ennui. The finite occasions experience themselves in ever new and transforming ways (144–47).

Bracken sees a further reason for having pursued his longer presentation of Suchocki's effort to anchor an affirmation of subjective immortality in a modified Whiteheadian reading of the final phases of the concrescing actual occasion. He proposes to show that considering this affirmation of subjective immortality in relation to his "trinitarian and field-oriented approach to the God-world relationship" allows it to take on further meaning (147). Among the points he takes up is the advantage that occurs in relating Suchocki's insight to a more explicitly communitarian understanding of God as three divine Persons. Bringing these two together helps avoid problems inherent in working with a notion of God as an individual entity (Whitehead) or a compound individual (Hartshorne). Bracken warns, on the one hand, that in thinking in either of these ways one ends up at least implicitly with a notion of substance and with the consequent difficulty of relating actual occasions to that substance as anything but a part of, or accident in relation to, it. On the other hand, such thinking can reduce God to nothing more than a sort of name for all finite entities taken together. What is needed to establish a true panentheism is of course a way to affirm that finite occasions retain their identity within a greater whole. Bracken holds that the notion of field as he has developed it, namely, one in which "the three divine persons and all their creatures possess an ontological independence of one another and yet co-constitute a common world," permits him

to affirm such a true panentheism. As he writes, “the divine persons and their creatures [together] constitute Ultimate Reality” (149, see 148–49).

Bracken sees a further advantage to working with his understanding of field in regard to the God-world relationship in that it permits us to uphold a proper understanding of the relationship between the one and the many. He has come back to this theme at various times over the course of *Society and Spirit*, indeed throughout his various works. He argues that Suchocki and Whitehead work with a scheme in which the unity of the many “is grounded in a common relationship to a transcendent One” (151). But he, in turn, holds to the idea he has developed, namely, that “the One is emergent out of the interrelated activities of the Many vis-à-vis one another.” His approach involves understanding God as a community of three divine Persons “who share a common field of activity with their creatures” (152) and out of which emerges divine unity. He argues that this, we might say quasi-empirical, approach allows him to continue working with the notion of a personal God. Others such as Bernard Meland and Bernard M. Loomer, who also proceed in a somewhat similar empirical approach, have found it more difficult to speak in terms of a personal God.<sup>37</sup> Bracken brings this chapter and the book as such to a close with a further description of his understanding of panentheism: “God immanent in the world and the world immanent in God without loss to the independent status of either God or the world” (159). The God-world relationship takes the form of a cosmic society (139).

### Transatlantic Idealist Echoes

Bracken offers an original and creative, panentheistic process-trinitarian reading of reality. He develops his thought in dialogue with others working in areas pertinent to his own interests and concerns. As we have seen, this has been the case with regard to two post-Kantian German Idealists, Schelling and Hegel. There are indeed strong Idealist echoes sounding from and reverberating through his thought. By entering into critical and constructive conversation with Schelling and Hegel, he has in effect also helped document in his own work their influence on his efforts to produce a new cosmology anchored in his constructive trinitarian proposal. Especially in *Society and Spirit* he draws heavily upon Schelling to develop his understanding of subjective spirit as the subject’s self-determination. He has taken Whitehead’s notion of decision and further justified its use through reference to Schelling’s notion of radical freedom, namely, that freedom and its

exercise is at the root of all reality. In doing so, however, he no longer sees decision as occurring before or outside of time, as Schelling argued, but repeatedly in time (97). He has as well used Hegel's notion of objective spirit, which he interprets as the realm of intersubjectivity. Based upon the similarity he sees between Hegel's emphasis and that of Whitehead on the one as being more than the sum of its parts (106), he employs Hegel's more developed understanding of objective spirit to enrich Whitehead's view of society. At the same time, he takes from Whitehead the idea that all of reality is constituted by movements of subjectivity, thus widening Hegel's realm of intersubjectivity to reality as a whole. Now for Bracken objective spirit, at all levels, includes within it moments of subjective spirit which, in turn, draw upon objective spirit as well as upon the preceding moments of subjective spirit in the process of their becoming.<sup>38</sup> It will be good at this point to recall Bracken's own remarks in the preface to *Society and Spirit*:

The reflections of Schelling on the nature of human subjectivity illuminate Whitehead's notion of an actual occasion as a self-constituting subject of experience; likewise, Hegel's development of the notion of objective spirit casts light on Whitehead's use of the category of society to describe civil society and the state. Hence, there is much to be learned from a judicious comparison of Whitehead's thought with that of Schelling and Hegel. (14)

Bracken confirms this dependence when he says that "in part two . . . I will elaborate my understanding of spirit in heavy dependence upon the German Idealists, Schelling and Hegel" (35). It is, in good measure, on the basis of these insights grounded in both Whitehead's cosmological scheme and Idealist understandings of subjectivity and intersubjectivity that he develops his trinitarian thought. For Bracken, the three divine Persons are the many as societies of actual occasions giving rise to the one God as the inclusive field of divine activity. More generally stated, the many are now actual occasions and subsocieties giving rise to societies as fields providing an environment or place within which subsocieties perdure and actual occasions come into being.

We can see as well that Bracken has been influenced, though perhaps in a sense more subtly, by Schelling and especially by Schelling from 1809 on, in constructing his understanding of society as a field. While it is true that in *Society and Spirit* Bracken refers to the notion of field as developed in physics, he in fact works with that notion in a more philosophical way

(57–58).<sup>39</sup> He has noted in personal communication that his use of field is, at a more general level, based on Schelling's idea of ground. It would seem that with his idea of ground Schelling offered to Bracken a way to build on Whitehead's reference to society as an environment while compensating for Whitehead's not attributing to society what we could describe as a sufficiently significant ontological status.<sup>40</sup> For Schelling the rational requires something pre- or even non-rational though not irrational, what he calls ground, in order to account for existence and facticity. And this idea of a prior ground becomes for Bracken field. One might indeed be tempted to trace this conceptual lineage from Kant with his notion of a thing-in-itself (*Ding an sich*) to Schelling's ground (variously *Grund*, *Abgrund*, *Ungrund*, *Urgrund*) to Bracken's field.<sup>41</sup>

It will suffice to focus on the conceptual lineage from Schelling to Bracken by bringing together and examining several of his remarks concerning ground, field, and Trinity in *Society and Spirit*, with reference as well to his revised doctoral dissertation published as *Freiheit und Kausalität*. According to Bracken, Schelling followed the pattern Ground/Consequent (*Grund/Folge*) in his thought from at least 1809 on, arguing thus for a certain priority to ground.<sup>42</sup> Bracken in turn attributes, properly understood, a type of ontological priority to society as field in relation to the actual occasions constituting it.<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, he in effect identifies ground and field when he equates the unbounded divine field with what Whitehead calls the extensive continuum and creativity. For these latter two together are "inseparable dimensions of the ultimate ground of the universe, but . . . this ground is the underlying nature of the Triune God." As he says explicitly, the extensive continuum and creativity, and so the divine field, co-constitute "first the ground of their [the three divine Persons'] own divine being and then by extension or participation the ground of all created entities as well" (131). Bracken's understanding of society as a field of activity, and more specifically the triune divine society as field, functions in his thought in a manner similar to the way in which ground functions more generally in Schelling's thought. In an insightful and creative way Bracken has taken inspiration from Schelling's notion of ground as he developed his own understanding of field, in which he found his needed "prior."

Along with Bracken's indications of direct Idealist influences on his thought there is the question of Idealist influence mediated through the impact Idealist thinkers have had on various thinkers with whom he enters into critical conversation. Among them, the most evident is Alfred North Whitehead, with whom he is to a great extent in agreement and with whose



overall process cosmology he works. Of particular interest in this regard is an article by Antoon Braeckman, "Whitehead and German Idealism: A Poetic Heritage."<sup>44</sup> In this article Braeckman notes that Whitehead insists he had read directly very little if any of Hegel. Still, as Braeckman points out, he had considerable secondhand contact with Hegel's thought.<sup>45</sup> With regard to Schelling's possible influence on Whitehead, Braeckman proceeds by tracing at some length the complex intellectual history of Schelling's influence on Coleridge and Wordsworth and their adoption of Schellingian ideas, at least as they understood them. Whitehead himself says that he had read especially Wordsworth, a fact Hartshorne confirms.<sup>46</sup> On the basis of this affirmation and of a number of striking resemblances Braeckman finds between aspects of the thought of Whitehead and Schelling, he strongly suggests that Whitehead was influenced by Schelling through these poets.<sup>47</sup> He examines in some detail a number of such resemblances of thought. But for present purposes we should note in particular the dynamic role of imagination and the importance of the notion of value in Schelling's philosophy of nature. These Braeckman sees as paralleled, respectively, in Whitehead's dynamic notion of creativity and Whitehead's envisioning of actual occasions as concurring movements of experience, subjectivity even in nature. He points as well to the fact that both Schelling's philosophy of nature and Whitehead's cosmology are philosophies of organism in which the one arises out of the many.<sup>48</sup> Braeckman of course recognizes profound differences between these two philosophies. Still he says, "I think the least we can say is that the suggested similarities are astonishing."<sup>49</sup> These resemblances between two dynamic and developmental philosophies, when coupled with Bracken's own direct study of Schelling, help us better understand and appreciate from where Bracken is coming. They help us as well appreciate what he has accomplished in constructing his own dynamic and developmental, ultimately trinitarian, cosmology.

Marc A. Pugliese has noted that over the course of his career Bracken has made significant creative advances in trinitarian understanding by dialoguing with a wide variety of thinkers in many different areas of interest.<sup>50</sup> These thinkers have themselves, in turn, in various ways influenced his thought. An important part of that decades-long dialogue is Bracken's work more directly with Idealist thought. In fact, Idealist insights reverberate in rather varied echo throughout Bracken's Trinity-enrooted cosmology. Pugliese reminds us, for example, of the importance of Schelling for Bracken when Pugliese says that the "central concern of both Schelling and process thinkers [including Bracken] is freedom as its own ground, generating being.

For both Whitehead and Schelling [and again Bracken] human subjectivity is not grounded in God as First Cause of every existent. Rather, it is grounded in its own power of radical self-constitution.”<sup>51</sup> We would need to qualify this important point Pugliese makes concerning the autonomy of human subjectivity and of course for Bracken all movements of subjectivity. We should recall, for example, Bracken’s understanding of the way in which creativity is communicated by God to such finite movements. Again, Pugliese reminds us of the importance of Hegel for Bracken when he says that for Bracken “the Hegelian *Begriff* or ‘concept’ is equivalent to the Whiteheadian concept of a ‘society,’ and governs both Hegel’s and Whitehead’s organismic view of reality.”<sup>52</sup> With these two themes, namely, the fundamental role of freedom and the way in which “society” functions (we might add in this latter case at least in certain ways in a manner similar to that of the Hegelian concept), we hear rather strong Idealist echoes in Bracken’s cosmology and in his more explicitly trinitarian thought.

In listening attentively, we recognize other echoes as well. For example, with the Idealists, especially Schelling and of course Whitehead, Bracken thinks in terms of a self-determining subject as action not presupposing a preexisting substantial entity. Along with various other resemblances previously mentioned between his thought and that of the Idealists, we might with more specific reference to Trinity note the key role that Trinity plays on the one hand in the philosophies, even in the philosophies of nature, of Hegel and Schelling and on the other hand in Bracken’s cosmology. We might also recall Bracken’s attribution of the extensive continuum to the Father and the space-time continuum to the Son (134). These attributions have a Schellingesque ring to them, reminding us of Schelling’s relating of the Father both with the primordial divine unity and with the first of the three divine potencies and Schelling’s relating of the Son, as second of these potencies, with creation. Taken together, these stronger as well as often somewhat softer Idealist echoes we hear in Bracken’s thought confirm that Bracken’s own creatively developed trinitarian cosmology witnesses in an outstanding way to the ongoing influence of post-Kantian German Idealist trinitarian thought and to its perduring legacy.



Dale M. Schlitt

*An Experiential Trinity*

As our review of a number of witnesses to the post-Kantian German Idealist trinitarian legacy comes to a close, I would like to take the opportunity to include reference to my own considerably more modest trinitarian reflection. With this reflection my intention has been, in more limited fashion, to put into words what we can say about Trinity on the basis of a closer examination of the Christian experience of God as Trinity and the affirmation of that experience.<sup>1</sup> In principle the experience itself and its basic affirmation remain relatively simple. But reflection on the experience and the desire, indeed the felt need people have, to speak of it becomes considerably more complex.

During my doctoral studies at Claremont Graduate School, now Claremont Graduate University, Prof. Dr. Ekkehard Mühlenberg suggested I do a dissertation on Hegel's trinitarian claim that to think God as personal one had to think of God as Trinity. This insightful and felicitous proposal led to my dissertation, subsequently published by Brill in 1984 as *Hegel's Trinitarian Claim: A Critical Reflection*<sup>2</sup> and republished by the State University of New York Press in 2012 in paperback format with bibliographical updating, a new preface, and a postscript.<sup>3</sup> In the dissertation I argued that "Hegel cannot establish his trinitarian claim as he intended to, namely, on the basis of an argumentation in the public realm from infinite to finite."<sup>4</sup> But I did accept that his overall trinitarian claim, when argued in a different way, remained unchallenged—at least by me. Over the years my perhaps overly audacious interest in fundamentally reworking Hegel's notion of Trinity continued as I taught and served in administration at Saint

Paul University in Ottawa, Canada, and then at Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas. My effort to work sympathetically and yet critically with Hegel's thought on Trinity has resulted in the 2007 publication, *Experience and Spirit: A Post-Hegelian Philosophical Theology*,<sup>5</sup> on which the following review focuses.

Already now we can say that I myself proposed to rework Hegel's claim, namely, that to think God as personal one needed to think God as Trinity, by working with experience rather than conceptual thought. The understanding of experience which I developed had itself been influenced at least in part by Hegel directly, with persons understood in the fullest sense as those who are generous movements of self-gift. That understanding was further influenced more indirectly by Hegel through the impact his thought had on pragmatist notions of experience.

### Schlitt on Trinity

*Experience and Spirit* moves in three parts from "Thought and Spirit" to "Experience" to "Experience and Spirit." In the first part, chapter 1 treats of Hegel's philosophy of religion as a philosophical theology. His philosophy of religion is a philosophy of God ultimately presented as a movement of inclusive divine subjectivity that in Christianity takes the form or shape (*Gestalt*) of Trinity. Chapter 2, "Hegel on Spirit and Trinity," traces Hegel's reading of the development of the notion of spirit from Descartes through Kant to Fichte on to Hegel's own concept of spirit. It continues with reference to Hegel's dialectical interpretation of Trinity and ends with two further considerations: first of Hegel from within a more theological context and then, more generally, of Trinity as movement of spirit. Chapter 3, entitled "With and Beyond Hegel," rehearses, among various points, Hegel's major concern with wholeness as the result of a dynamic movement of inclusive conceptual thought, a movement of spirit. The chapter also very briefly lists some of the hesitations commonly expressed concerning Hegel's thought. From a more philosophical perspective, there are concerns regarding adequacy and internal coherence. Regarding adequacy, for example, conceptual thought might not be the most appropriate medium with which to interpret religion. And his reading of the history of religions might not correspond sufficiently to that history's actual development. Regarding internal coherence, I have argued among several points that, given the exigencies of his systematic thinking, Hegel cannot justify the initial moment of the move-

ment of pure or logical thought as the moment of pure being. From a more religious perspective, many find unacceptable his ways of dealing with evil, freedom, and mystery in terms of and as forms of a movement of conceptual thought occurring in and through human thought. After remarks on several of Hegel's important contributions to philosophy in general and, by extension, to trinitarian thought, the chapter returns to the question of the overall problematic character of Hegel's philosophical theology. It then closes with a few first suggestions concerning ways to work with Hegel on Trinity while at the same time going beyond him. For example, mention is made of Gadamer's effort to rethink and rehabilitate Hegel's notion of the bad infinite or infinite progression as a movement of linguistically conditioned experience. This reference to Gadamer is followed by some initial proposals on my part for a renewed understanding of spirit as movement of enriching experience and of Trinity as the infinite form of such a movement.<sup>6</sup> These briefly stated remarks on and proposals concerning Hegel, experience, spirit, and Trinity lead into the second and third parts of *Experience and Spirit*.

The second part of *Experience and Spirit* opens with chapter 4, entitled "Gadamer, Royce, Dewey, Smith." The chapter details at greater length what we have already mentioned in the introduction to part 4 of the present study concerning the influence of German Idealism, and especially that of Hegel, on American philosophically formulated, more pragmatist understandings of experience. This chapter 4 first refers to Gadamer in Germany.<sup>7</sup> It then proposes a trajectory of development in the United States from Hegel through Royce, who in his own creative reflection further developed certain aspects of the thought of Peirce, on to Dewey and John E. Smith. These developments resulted in, as I would read it, an understanding of experience as the relationship between self and other giving rise to an enriched or impoverished self. I suggested that this development constituted, in effect, a longer-range reworking of Hegel's notion of spirit seen now not as a movement of conceptual thought but of enriching experience. In effect, the notion of becoming spoken of at the end of my doctoral dissertation had taken on flesh, at least from my perspective, as a movement of experience.<sup>8</sup>

The second part of *Experience and Spirit* continues with chapter 5, "A Grammar of Experience," and chapter 6, "A Phenomenology of Experience." Especially in the English-speaking world experience is such a rich and complex notion that we need to come at it from various perspectives. So chapter 5 conjugates, so to speak, experience in order to arrive at an understanding of its varied forms. To identify varieties of experience, I first drew especially upon Dewey in identifying three overall types or phases of experience. First

experience is characterized by a sense of immediacy and givenness. Second experience is a more abstractive reflection on and prolongation of first experience. Third experience is an enriched return to first experience, often leading to engaged action. In summary:

These three types and phases of experience . . . are each in its own way relation, process and result. Each is a structured movement of becoming, namely, initial selfhood and otherness in relationship giving rise to resultant selfhood that is equally renewedly initial selfhood in relationship with otherness. First experience is, however, that which launches the overall movement of human experience. Second experience arises out of and prolongs first experience as the critical, creative and constructive examination of first experience. Third experience is a return in a new way to first experience that validates and consummates the second experience. It is, in fact, a synthesizing prolongation of first and second experiences. The three, as Dewey says, "functionally distinct" types of experience constitute three phases in a fully lived overall movement of experience. (143–44)

Chapter 5 continues with experience further identified as communal, shared by a couple or between friends, and individual, or a combination of them, depending on the nature of the self in relationship with the other and of course then the resultant self. From the point of view of the other, experience can be described as occurring within, without, and up ahead, according to where the other concerned is located in relation to the experiencing self. Again from the point of view of the other, experience can be that of a certain absence of the other. Finally, if experience is considered on the basis of reference to the resultant self, it can be described as enriching or impoverishing, and at times perhaps a bit of both, though one or the other usually characterizes the experience as such (144–51).

Chapter 6 accounts more fully for the overall dynamic movement of experience. This phenomenological account takes the form of a longer looking at, analyzing, and reflecting on ways in which self and other relate to one another (155). The chapter opens with a series of initial remarks concerning what is given in such a reflection, including reference to the variously conditioned character of any human experience. It then proceeds with a presentation in the form of two parallel analyses, one from the perspective of the self and the other from the perspective of the other. These

analyses are followed by a further consideration from the perspective of the resultant self. The self moves, very briefly stated, in dialectically sequential fashion from the openness of faith or closedness of indifference toward the other to a sense of hope or despair in reaching the other. It continues on to the discovery that the only way to respect the other while bridging the gap between self and other is through love or, regrettably, violence. In parallel, dialectically sequential development, the other appears or does not truly appear to the self, then becomes present to or in some sense absent from the self and, finally, more fully reveals itself to or conceals itself from the self. In this dialogically structured relationship between self and other they can participate generously. That is, they so participate if the self in relation to the other stands open and trusting in faith, longs for the other in hope and gives of itself to the other in love, and if the other manifests itself in appearance to the self, in real presence to the self and in true self-revelation to the self. If we are dealing with generous participation, then the experience takes on the form of qualitative increase through generous self-gift and the result is enriched selfhood. But self and other may at any point participate selfishly, that is, with the self being indifferent to the other, despairing of reaching the other or violent in its reach for the other. Again, the other may not appear to the self, not be really present to the self or finally conceal itself from the self. If such is the case, then the experience becomes one of qualitative decrease and results in impoverished selfhood (160–94). In fact, a dialectically sequential movement of experience can be halted by self and/or other at any moment along the way.

I have proposed that this structured movement is in principle characteristic of all of the various forms of experience indicated in the previous chapter. In effect, whereas for Hegel phenomenological analysis led to the uncovering of logical thought determinations structuring the various shapes according to which self and other relate to one another, here such analysis directs attention to the various shapes or stances themselves manifested by self and other. This complex, phenomenologically analyzed movement of experience can be summarized as follows:

The dialogical interplay between self and other occurs again and again as the self progresses in a dialectically structured dynamic development . . . as a series of potentially enriching or impoverishing moments as stances of the self vis-à-vis the other. The other likewise moves in a dialectically structured dynamic development through a series of potentially encouraging or menacing



moments or ways of relating to the self. In the self's movement of conversion, or non-conversion, and in the other's movement of epiphanic self-manifestation, or non-manifestation, each moment is the dialectically developed successor of the previous moment or moments. Each is momentary totality of self or other. (194)<sup>9</sup>

The third part of *Experience and Spirit* is, as the title of the book, itself entitled "Experience and Spirit" (203).<sup>10</sup> It consists of three chapters, the first of which is chapter 7, "Experience of God." Chapter 7 opens with several preliminary remarks. In this chapter the focus is on enriching experience, the form of the movement of spirit's essentially triadic structure: initial selfhood and otherness in relationship, giving rise to enriched selfhood (205). More specifically, reference is made to what we have called first or more immediate experience, in this case the Christian communal, shared, and individual experience of God and the affirmation of that experience. The chapter proceeds in the form of a series of reflections on this first experience, reflections which we can identify as second experience, namely, a longer reflection on the just mentioned first experience. This more reflexive and analytical second experience serves, if one is reflecting on a first experience one has shared in or had, as a prolongation of that first experience in the realm of reflexive thought. If not, then it can be seen as a reflection on the affirmation of that first experience. In either case, the reflection is carried out in the public realm on the basis of what can be said in line with accepted canons of logic and with the notion of experience worked out in previous chapters. After this second or more reflexive experience, the chapter continues with the description of what we might call a third experience, an enriching return to first experience. Third experience brings together the results of the more reflexively presented and argued second experience and the more immediately realized first experience in a finally fuller and more complete overall movement of experience. In effect, this chapter proposes a form of philosophical theology describable as *experientia Dei querens intellectum* ("experience of God seeking understanding") (206–08).

The more conceptually expressed analysis or second experience moves in two parts or, perhaps better, moments, with the first being a more phenomenological look at the trinitarian experience of God and/or, as the case may be, its affirmation. It then takes the shape of a more conceptually expressed philosophical reflection in the form of a logical argument reconstructing certain elements of that experience. The first or phenomenological look at the experience of God and its affirmation (209–25) opens with

several recapitulative remarks on experience including the observation that, whether enriched or impoverished, the self has in developing through a movement of experience both left something behind and found itself at a new vantage point. As well, this finite self finds itself immediately and ever renewedly in relationship with an other. Experience is, consequently, both constitutive revelatory encounter and resultant impoverishment or enrichment (209).

Following upon such remarks as these, the chapter takes up more general considerations concerning the notion of experience of God (210–14). Among these considerations, two receive particular attention. The first is the question of what is given in a phenomenological look at an experience of God. There is brief mention of the four “givens” and their variously conditioned character in any phenomenological regard: “The initial, underlying relationship between self and whatever other is involved; the experiencing self; the other with which the self finds itself in relation; the result of the relationship between self and other . . . as well [as] . . . the conditioned character [social, cultural, linguistic, religious, and so forth] of this quadruple “given” and . . . the structured movement that a phenomenological analysis reveals” (210). We should add as well and perhaps more explicitly further factors conditioning the self, namely, factors rooted in its past and influencing what it is and the way it interacts with the other in the present moment. Such conditioning does not relativize an experience, not even an experience of God. Rather, it recognizes and affirms the concrete character of any experience in general and such an experience in particular.

A second consideration involves recognizing a common characteristic of religious experiences and experiences of God more specifically, with these phrases taken here in a rather general sense. Such experiences of course vary greatly throughout history, sometimes occurring at the founding moment of a religious tradition and at other times within the ongoing history of various religious traditions or even independently of them in their more institutionalized forms. Yet there seems common to them all a form of enrichment realized and recognized as the overwhelming sense of an at least momentary wholeness, integration, well-being, and balance or harmony with others and the ambient world that the community, couples or friends and individuals come to sense and that they then affirm (211).<sup>11</sup>

We can reverse the order of relation, presence, and result characteristic of the phenomenological structure of an experience in order better to point more specifically to the four givens considered in relation to religious experience. This conditioned quadruple given involves, first, a resultant sense

of wholeness on emotive, affective, and mental levels. Second, we cannot explain it, namely, this sense of wholeness, simply by referring to ourselves. Third, it implies an experiencing self. And fourth, it refers as well to an awareness that this has its origin in some form of underlying relationship or even identity between self and other. So one usually refers to some "beyond" which would take the shape of a divine personal reality or simply a "beyond the self" (212). These preliminary remarks end with two further, qualifying notes. First, we are here dealing with moments of awareness, calm or more explosive, of being in relationship with God and, consequently, with all that is around us (213). Second, while we are speaking more explicitly of Christian experiences of God, we need to remain sensitive to the varieties of individual religious experiences and to the communities and members of other religious traditions as well as those more or less outside any such traditions.

After these preliminary remarks, chapter 7 continues this second experience with a phenomenological analysis of the trinitarian experience of God. This analysis itself proceeds in two phases. The first phase takes the form of a more abstractly expressed look laying the groundwork for further reflection. With special reference here to recurrent structure and dynamic, we can note that the felt sense of wholeness is attained through human experience, indeed through a series of ever-renewed tetradically structured finite experiences: selfhood and otherness in relationship giving rise to resultant, enriched or impoverished selfhood itself initial selfhood in relationship with recurrent otherness. Though this sense of wholeness arises out of such a tetradically structured movement of experience, it is as if it momentarily suspends the awareness of recurrent otherness, giving a sort of premonition of eternity.

In looking at these experiences, Christian communities, couples, friends, and/or individuals see that the sense of wholeness has a double focus. First, it occurs as a more immediate feeling within the self. Second, the self feels, indeed has a felt conviction, that this sense of wholeness and balance with all around arises from beyond the self. This sense of origin beyond the self in turn occurs in two ways. The self appreciates such a sense first as welling up from beyond but within the self. The self is equally aware that it comes from without, in that through its orientation outward to others the self is aware of the revelatory presence of an other, so to speak, offering itself generously to the self through these various others. This other is perceived in turn as offering itself in terms of call and invitation to enrichment through serving others and as goal toward which the self lives. Thus there is a triply self-manifesting otherness: otherness within; otherness from without as more immediate external source of enriching

growth; and, otherness from without as goal and purpose for which one lives. With this triply present otherness as source of enriching growth, here a sense of wholeness within and balance with all around, Christians live within the context of a triply structured dynamic personal, generously self-giving embrace (218, see 215–19).

The second phase at (and of) the level of second experience continues the phenomenological look at the trinitarian experience of God. It fleshes out the previous, more abstractly formulated structural analysis. In it we pick up on the more emotive language Christians use and rich affective tenor characteristic of their lives (215, 215–25). To give a brief taste of the form and direction this more concrete phase takes, we will selectively present several aspects which that look brings forth. We will do this, however, without trying to capture in any detail the more exact transitions presented in the analysis. Of particular note will be basic phenomenological stances of self and other, previously presented in chapter 6, as they show through in the present analysis of what Christians experience, which experience they spontaneously see as being in continuity with Christian experience through 2,000 years. That experience had its founding moment in Jesus of Nazareth's sense of sonship and consciousness of the power of the eschatological spirit working in and through him.<sup>12</sup> We should note as well that language used in the affirmation of these experiences, both contemporary and past, often weaves together liturgical and scriptural phrases.

Christians find themselves living within the context of a triply structured dynamic divine other experienced as personal embrace. They situate themselves within a dialogically structured relationship between the Spirit of God and the Risen One (220). At least at certain moments they feel themselves related to a unique, personalized presence within, a form of more immediate unity with the divine other. This divine other appears to, is present to, and reveals itself to the self as necessary initial source, within the self, of the sense of wholeness felt as welling up within the finite self. The self responds in stances of faith, hope, and love, finding itself urged to turn outward to others in response to the more immediate presence of this divine other. The internally experienced, outwardly directing divine personal other, this movement of generosity, is at times addressed directly, and is traditionally named the Holy Spirit, the necessary moment of initial divine selfhood (221).

The Spirit's murmuring and urging from within becomes a freeing from self-enslavement as Christians turn in self-giving love to others. Christians also experience the Spirit of God as the Spirit of Jesus, for in this

move outward the self focuses on a particularized divine other recognized as having been a historically identifiable individual, Jesus of Nazareth, now the Risen One. This encounter is of course mediated through the community. The self finds itself, through the Risen One, in balance with all of finite reality. It addresses directly this particular divine other, traditionally called Christ and Risen One, in attitudes of faith, hope, and love. Christ the Risen One is recognized as more immediate source of wholeness, integration, and balance, source existentially manifest to finite consciousness from without and explicitly in the form of an other whose very appearance to the self is a call and invitation to a richer and fuller life (222). This divine other provides an enriching salvific example and is one who brings into being the reign of God. Having historically addressed God as Father and surely as *Abba*, my Father, the Risen One's presence and self-revelation in turn gives Christians encouragement and courage. The Risen One is love incarnate, a generous self-offering to God, to friends and even to enemies. This exteriorly experienced divine personal other is thus the actual moment of divine otherness that is, in its particularity, nevertheless inclusive of finite otherness as such.

So urged and moved by the Spirit, Christians are opened to the Risen One's appearance, whom they then recognize, to whose call and invitation they respond, and the demands of whose discipleship they accept. They turn to the Risen One for whose presence they long and to whom in his self-revelation they, urged by the Spirit, spontaneously and generously wish to give themselves in love (223). The Spirit orients Christians to the Risen One, by and through whom they are directed to the one Jesus of Nazareth had addressed as Father and, again, as *Abba*, my Father, God who is *Abba*.

The Spirit within the self and the Risen One as historically and now spiritually experienced divine other direct finite spirit's hope toward a realm of peace and justice and love (224). Manifest through appearance, presence, and revelation as universal goal, this divine other is addressed by Christians as Father and loving Parent. Such a way of referring to God mirrors Jesus' own favored way of address. This basic attitude of looking up to and toward is what a child first does in relation to the child's parent or parents. The child only later develops a more explicit sense of origination. In summary,

God is experienced as that divine other to whom the Risen One's friends and followers look in trust, longing and love. God is that goal toward whom the Spirit urges and to and of whom the Risen One speaks so intimately that these friends and followers too

look forward with confidence and without fear . . . In the Spirit and through Jesus, now the Risen One, . . . Christians recognize they have the final realization and fullness of their potential only in God who, especially according to divine appearance, presence and self-revelation in the Spirit through the Risen One, is the truth of pure, generous self-giving love that is a movement of enriching experience or spirit. (225)

As we finish our review of this two-phased phenomenological analysis of the trinitarian experience of God, we should note that the analysis in effect brings to light three underlying phenomenological givens or basic human experiences and attitudes: the urge outward from the self (Spirit); otherness as source of enrichment (the Risen One); the fundamental human attitude of “looking toward” and “longing for” (God as goal) (256). This two-phased phenomenological analysis just referred to constitutes the first moment in what we have termed second experience or more abstractive and reflective examination of the initial and more immediate, emotionally more engaged first experience. The second moment in this more reflective examination takes the shape, as mentioned earlier, of a more conceptually expressed philosophical reflection in the form of a logical argument reconstructing certain elements of the first experience. This second moment focuses on the move from finite to inclusive infinite (225–36). As was the case with the first moment, namely, that of the two-phased phenomenological analysis of first experience, here we will simply highlight selected elements of the overall argument in order to give a sense of the approach being taken in this philosophical reflection.

This reflection opens with a brief recall that for Hegel, from the perspective of his systematic philosophy as a whole, the movement is one from abstract infinite to finitude to true or inclusive infinite. According to Hegel, “there is this to be said about the coming or going forth of the finite from the infinite: the infinite goes forth *out* of itself into finitude because, being grasped as an abstract unity, it has no truth, no enduring being within it; and conversely, the finite goes *into* the infinite for the same reason, namely that it is a nullity.”<sup>13</sup> In contrast, I have proposed that arguing in the public realm requires, rather, that one begin with finitude, as one does when one works with the notion of experience rather than that of thought. This reflection on the Christian experience of God and the affirmation of that experience will help us recognize that the Christian experience of God has already, in its own way, given expression to the transition from finite to

infinite in first experience. Again, in the second experience the transition has also been seen to have occurred in the phenomenological analysis constituting the first moment in that second experience. Reflection on the Christian experience of God and its affirmation has done this in a way appropriate to each of the two types of experience, namely, first and second. Now, this philosophical reflection serves, as characteristic of such reflection, to spell out the logic, so to speak, of this transition. It does this with reference to the in principle triadic structure of experience: initial selfhood and otherness in relationship giving rise, in light of present concerns, to enriched selfhood. However, in line with our intention to move from finite to infinite, we will proceed from reflection more directly on the *de facto* tetradic structure of finite experience. That tetradically structured movement is, by way of recall, one from initial selfhood and otherness in relationship to enriched selfhood renewedly in relationship with the recurring presence of otherness. In this philosophical reflection we will conclude that, without this inclusive infinite, namely, triadically structured enriching experience as such, finitude as available to reflective review would remain finally incapable of explaining the wholeness that humans experience from time-to-time. More profoundly, finitude would itself remain ungrounded self-contradiction (228).

We can now summarize several moves in the argument from finite to inclusive infinite. Finite becoming is real but, also, problematic. The otherness involved is never inclusively related to selfhood and vice versa, so it never finally grounds and explains experienced resultant wholeness. For resultant selfhood is constitutively both inclusive and one-sided, given the recurrence of otherness making resultant selfhood equally and at the same time initial selfhood over against otherness. Resultant enriched selfhood, which is our concern here rather than impoverished selfhood, is what it is primarily and paradoxically through respectful inclusion of otherness by the self's generous act of self-gift to the other. Yet equally such enriched resultant selfhood does not include otherness. There is a one-sidedness and incompleteness in the very moment of respectful inclusion. The very moment of inclusion or enrichment is the moment of noninclusion as well since the limit identifying recurrent otherness as not being enriched selfhood/renewed initial selfhood is common to enriched selfhood as well (230). Enriched selfhood is self-contradictorily inclusive and one-sided in its very moment of enrichment. Furthermore, finite becoming itself, in its tetradic structure, involves self-contradiction. The process takes place, from the same perspective, both as inclusion and noninclusion, enrichment and limitation. Limit is present within it both at the beginning in the distinction between

initial selfhood and otherness and at the end in resultant selfhood being equally and at the same time initial selfhood over against recurrent otherness. Otherness is in turn both potential source of enrichment for the self and not the self. As an endless progression of recurrent relationships between selfhood and otherness, experience always brings with it a sense both of loss and of gain (231).<sup>14</sup> The sequential process remains in its enrichment one-sided, for it remains as process equally inclusion and noninclusion. Neither result nor process resolves the self-contradiction.

This tetradic structure of experience as finite becoming not only indicates but, in its own way as reflecting in discursive philosophical language what the trinitarian experience of God reveals, calls for and points to beyond itself. It points to that triadically structured inclusive whole wherein the tension of its own self-contradictory inclusion and noninclusion finds respectful resolution and where there would only be a sense, so to speak, of gain without reference to loss or limit. The problem of the recurrent limit rooted in the recurrence of otherness must be resolved if we wish to justify the more, here the experience of wholeness, which is enriched selfhood (232). Thinking through otherness as source both of enrichment and limitation points to a way to resolve this contradiction, for it can be a source of both only if otherness as such can be considered within the context of a becoming in which it is neither recurrent nor multiple but simply source of distinction within the movement of experience and thus of enrichment (233). There needs to be a form of infinite becoming containing otherness *qua* otherness, including tetradically structured finite becoming. Otherwise we remain with the self-contradictory finite form of becoming. This infinite becoming is the dialectically argued to, and dialogically functioning, respectfully inclusive other of tetradically structured or finite becoming (234). Now the erotic need of the abstract infinite to have finitude as other over against itself in order to become truly concrete and true infinite is transformed. The abstract infinite's erotic need is re-identified as the erotic need of finitude to find itself situated within the context of an infinite movement of experience consisting of dialogically related constituents or moments of initial selfhood and otherness as such giving rise to resultant enriched selfhood.

So far this reflection on the Christian trinitarian experience of God, on what we have called a first experience, has proceeded as what we have termed a second experience. This critical, creative, and constructive reflection on first experience consisted in two parts or, as said earlier, moments. The first moment took the form of a phenomenological regard itself carried out in two phases. The first phase consisted in an analysis focusing more



on structure and then the second phase amounted to a reflection bringing into play the more emotive concrete language of the first experience. The second part or moment involved a more philosophical reflection on the move from finite to infinite exemplified, and affirmed at least implicitly, in the first experience and in the second experience up to this, its second part or moment.

We now proceed to what we have named a third experience as an enriching and integrating return to first experience. This third experience brings with it, consummates so to speak, what has been gained through the more reflective and analytical second experience (236–49). Second experience was a prolongation of first experience and/or its affirmation. Third experience is a prolongation of the first and second types or phases of the experience of God and/or its affirmation. To further explain and ground the relationships here proposed among first, second, and third experiences, it will be helpful to recall the rootage of this notion and affirmation of prolongation. That rootage lies in the “idea that in any movement of finite experience the resultant self is equally renewedly initial self . . . [with there being] continuity through development . . . to the human self that participates in . . . second experience. The self resulting from the second experience is . . . then capable of being the initial self in a third experience” (236–37).

The sketching out of this reading of third experience or enriching return to the first or initial Christian communal, shared, and individual experience of God itself or at least its affirmation consists in a further phenomenological look that also takes place in two phases, steps or, probably better, moments. The first of these moments involves working with an integrating metaphor, namely, the kingdom or, as preferably phrased, reign and realm of God. The second is a recapitulative revisiting of the first experience. In taking up the integrating biblical metaphor of the reign and realm of God as rooted in the proclamation of Jesus of Nazareth, we follow in part at least what Hegel himself had done in his own philosophy of religion, especially in his later lectures (239–43).<sup>15</sup> Among many advantages, the metaphor of the reign and realm of God brings with it a strong emotional reaction that leaves few people indifferent even today, 2,000 years after Jesus of Nazareth spoke of it. This capacity to evoke an emotional reaction helps us recapture and reintroduce into the discussion aspects of the first or original Christian experience of God not focused on in the second experience. Speaking of the reign and realm of God leads us to further understanding and to action, often action in the areas of social justice and ecological concern.

We have come to affirm that experience of the Spirit of God leads to a recognition of the Spirit as the One who initiates the reign of God among and within Christians by urging them outward in a generous way toward others (239). The Risen One, in turn, calls Christians to form a more inclusive Christian community and provides, through generous concern for others, an example of how to live in that community and in the wider world. The Risen One's historical existence and activity is in effect the inbreaking of the renewed reign of God in human history. Christians then live within the relationship between Spirit and Risen One. We had spoken of the enriching movement from self to the other with whom the self is in relationship, calling the moments in this movement those of faith, hope, and love. Living in ways which short-circuit or arrest this enriching move result in an at least momentary thwarting of the inbreaking of the reign of God into the lives of Christians and into the world in which they live. Christians' communal, shared, and individual experience of the Trinity affirms and grounds their sense of freedom, ultimately their freedom from self-enclosure and, consequently, self-enslavement. It confirms their reality as spirit and shows a certain sense of purpose in that the experience leads them to a feeling of communal, shared, and individual wholeness as well as a consequent desire to serve others.

Christians experience the Trinity as itself experiencing finitude, both that which is good and that which is evil (240). They experience the inbreaking of the reign of God as the triply occurring divine movement of manifestation and, more precisely, appearance, presence and revelation, of Spirit, Risen One, and God as goal. All three, active in and through the tetradi-cally structured movement of experience, are experienced by Christians as a single overall movement of enrichment respectfully including otherness and the other, a generous divine movement of self-giving love (241). The reign of God is the inbreaking of Spirit as urge, Risen One as call, and God as goal, all in and through human, and on another occasion we might even say cosmic, experience. This inbreaking has effects at various levels. It results in a slow enrichment of life in a wounded world: moments of faith, hope, and love; gestures of concern for social justice; expressions of mutual respect and caring for one another; working toward ecological balance. Indeed, Christians experience the Spirit, Risen One, and God as experiencing them. The Spirit urges all that is good and enriching, the Risen One experiences all that is good and that is evil or impoverishing. *Abba*, God the goal of life and of finite reality, has received all through Spirit and Risen One. There is then a slow and almost imperceptible introduction of finitude into the

whole realm of the triune God (242). While ever maintaining the clear distinction between finite and inclusive infinite, we can say that Christians experience the inbreaking of the reign of God as their being freed from self-enclosure, consequently, self-enslavement. And the triune God experiences them for they are taken up into the life of the Trinity, itself a movement of enriching experience and spirit (243).

So far in our sketching out of this third experience we have considered the reign and realm of God a movement of enriching experience and spirit. We have presented it in the form of a movement of inclusive divine subjectivity (243). Now in the second moment of this further phenomenological look at the initial Christian experience of God we return in more recapitulative fashion to previous phenomenological and philosophical analyses of the Christian experience of God who, as both truth and goodness, is the structured trinitarian movement of divine self-giving love (243–49). More fully stated, Christians' human experience of God reveals a divine personal embrace or context, the triune God as a triadically structured movement of inclusive or infinite divine enriching experience, a movement of divine subjectivity and of spirit in the form of divine self-giving love. Christians find that within this embrace, ultimately the realm of God, they can speak of God's active and passive experience of the world and human history. Through the Spirit as initial divine selfhood and the Risen One as divine other in principle including all others, God is their goal, addressed intimately, all in all. The active presence of the Spirit and the incarnation establish three real relationships between world and God as well as between God and world.

The structured divine context is "one all-embracing and unrepeatable, finally non-temporal triadically structured infinite or inclusive movement" of experience. In this movement of experience the three divine constituents or moments are not reducible to one another. Without all three of them there would be no movement of divine enriching experience. The whole movement of divine enriching experience is, and here we say this particularly from the perspective of the communal, shared, and/or individual experiencing self, "one of self-giving love as epiphanic self-manifestation, namely, a movement of appearance, presence and revelation, [and] each moment or instantiation is itself a particular moment, itself developing in its own dialectical way as a movement of appearance, presence and revelation, and thus a moment of self-giving love offered to finite selves and all of created reality" (245). Christians pray to the Spirit, the Risen One, and God as goal of their lives in ways appropriately reflecting their experience of each

one of these three who are, as self-giving, experienced as divine others. They are each in a particular way personal selves. Each personal or self-giving divine other is an identifiable source of human enrichment and wholeness. At the same time, since Christians experience themselves as living within one divine embrace, they find themselves quite able to focus now on one, now on another, instance of divine self-giving love.

There is an ordered relationality to this triadically structured movement of love that Christians experience. In this movement of divine enriching experience, the Spirit is experienced as often hardly thematized, but necessary, initial other manifesting itself through appearance, presence, and revelation intimately within the finite self and orienting it outward beyond itself. As originating source of all that is true and good and self-giving, the Spirit actively experiences the world, exercising a form of what is often called efficient causality, a causality sometimes quite subtle and gentle and other times more dramatic and noticeable. Within the relationship between Spirit and Risen One, the latter is experienced by the finite self as that permanently present actual other whose historical existence and risen presence is, for Christians, the more immediate, explicit source of human enrichment, the paradigm of all human enrichment. In historical existence and now in resurrectional presence, the Risen One experiences, actively and passively, history and the experiences constituting it. The Risen One's historically identifiable epiphanic movement of appearance as call and invitation, supportive presence, and generous self-revelation are expressed respectively in and through this incarnate divine self's life of faith, hope, and love. The Risen One exercises, through suffering, death, and resurrection, a certain formal causality, referring thus to God who is "the fullness of the divine potential toward whom the Spirit urges, to whom the Risen One constantly points and, consequently, for whom Christians are called to live" (247). In their trinitarian experience, Christians glimpse God, Jesus' *Abba*, as final moment of wholeness and integration, a realized fullness working as a form of final causality. God who is realized potential appears, is present, and reveals Godself through Spirit and Risen One as, from the perspective of Christians, that potential toward which they long and which promises to be a realm of peace and justice and love. God is self-giving in character and thus personal, "resultant enriched divine selfhood inclusive of all that has been urged by the Spirit and either offered or received by the Risen One" (248). This movement of the triune God as spirit is as well, in self-offer, a threefold divine experience of the universe and of humankind:

The Spirit is experienced by finite selves as experiencing finitude as the field in which it actively moves them outward to others and to the Risen One. The Risen One, in turn, is experienced as experiencing finitude both as that to which the Risen One makes an intentional self-offer and as that from which all that the Spirit has successfully urged is received. . . . God as goal and fulfilment of all human striving for wholeness, integration, well-being and balance is experienced as experiencing finitude as that through which all Spirit-urged human endeavor patterned on the life, death and resurrection of the Risen One arises. (248)

In this divine experience, the Risen One also experiences evil and suffering, that which is at least immediately impoverishing rather than enriching (248). And God thus experiences as well evil and suffering which is, in hope, to be re-seen in view of the death and resurrection of the Risen One. So the triune God is "the true infinite, a movement of enriching experience, divine subjectivity and spirit respectfully inclusive of all finite otherness, a movement of love" (249) as generous self-gift.

Chapter 7, which we have reviewed at some length, leads into chapter 8, which proposes a revised form of analogical predication. In this revised form, analogical predication is based on the real distinctions among the three divine Persons rather than on the more traditionally expressed Thomistic understanding of analogy rooted in a distinction of reason between divine essence and divine existence. Chapter 7 leads as well on through this chapter 8 to the final chapter, which reconsiders the questions of evil, freedom, and mystery in light of the previous reflections on Trinity as movement of divine enriching experience. These are questions that have often been considered as inadequately handled by Hegel when he interpreted them in terms of conceptual thought.

Chapter 7 itself closes with several further, wider-ranging remarks. Among them, it draws attention to the incipient trinitarian metaphysics discernible in and through a further reflection on the Christian trinitarian experience of God, namely, becoming as a movement from necessity through actuality to potentiality (249). The Spirit is initial necessary moment, the Risen One actuality, and God, as goal, potentiality fully realized from the divine perspective and that which is longed for from the human perspective. In finite becoming initial selfhood is the necessary moment, otherness is the actuality to which one refers, and resultant enriched or impoverished selfhood the potentiality toward which initial selfhood and otherness in rela-

tionship move. Resultant enriched or impoverished selfhood is again necessary moment as initial selfhood renewedly in relationship with otherness as actuality. As movement to enriched selfhood, divine and human becoming are movements of spirit. By comparison, very generally stated anew, Hegel's thought moves from potentiality to actuality to necessity and Kierkegaard's reflection from necessity to potentiality to actuality. As mentioned at the end of chapter 2 above, in the later Schelling's trinitarian thought the movement would be one from initial pure actuality to potentiality to the realization of that potentiality in renewed actuality.

Chapter 7 ends with the suggestion that the understanding of Trinity here presented has certain advantages. It proposes a more horizontal and less Neo-Platonic hierarchical structuring of reality. It helps move beyond the tension between universally formulatable and positively revealed religion and the mere juxtaposition of social and monosubjectival expressions of Trinity. Each phenomenologically distinguished personal divine other is addressed as "You," yet the overall movement of divine self-giving experience or love is clearly one (251). The proposal arises in at least implicit dialogue with modern and postmodern thought. With the former it maintains an interest in subjectivity and with the latter it stresses the fundamental role of otherness. It has the potential to open dialogue on religious experience with other religious and ethical traditions. In line with what Basil of Caesarea and the other Cappadocians did in fundamentally reworking the Neo-Platonic worldview, in speaking of divine and human experience this proposal opens a space, so to speak, for the interplay between divine and human freedom. Starting with the Spirit recall's Basil's remark that "the way of knowledge of God lies from One Spirit through the One Son to the One Father."<sup>16</sup> Finally, understanding the triune God as a movement of enriching experience as self-giving love lays the basis for affirming our liberation from self-enslavement and opens out to a renewed understanding of the spiritual as well as to prophetic concerns for engaged ethical action (251–52).

### Transatlantic Idealist Echoes

From early on I had intended to work with Hegel on Trinity, arguing that he could not establish his trinitarian claim on the basis of an argumentation in the public realm from infinite to finite. The critique focused on the way in which he argued that spirit and, in the philosophy of religion, Trinity was, in its speculative formulation, a self-determining movement of

conceptual thought from infinite to finite. I wanted to continue working with his general idea of the divine as a triadically structured inclusive infinite, God inclusive of the world, while proposing to ground this idea in an alternative Trinitarian argument from finitude to triadic inclusive infinite. Over the years I attempted to work with Hegel, while so to speak going beyond him in a sympathetic yet critical way—sympathetic to his overall project but critical of the way in which he argued it.

My initial intention, the subsequent decision taken to work with Hegel, and further follow-through make it quite easy to hear and recognize varied echoes of Hegel's Idealist trinitarian thought in my trinitarian proposal. Among these there is, first of all and most fundamentally, the very working with experience rather than with conceptual thought in speaking of Trinity. Working especially with the notion of enriching experience as in principle triadically structure movement continues Fichte's initial insight into the triadic structure of subjectivity and echoes in many ways Hegel's triadically structured movement of spirit. So, working with the notion of experience builds upon the longer trajectory from Hegel's relating of self and other in Hegel's 1807 *Phenomenology of Spirit* on through pragmatist and pragmaticist understandings of experience, understandings themselves influenced, among others, by German Idealist thought. I would contend that it helps avoid some of the perceived problems with Hegel's philosophy, which arise in good part from the fact that Hegel understands spirit as a movement of conceptual thought. At the same time, working with the notion of spirit as movement of enriching experience permits one to retain many of the gains that come with Hegel's philosophy. One of these gains, for example, is seeing subjectivity as an ontologically dense movement in its own right, not requiring recourse to an underlying substantialist substrate. Experience also serves as a better medium through which to speak of evil, freedom, and mystery. These are questions whose handling by Hegel many have found either ambiguous or, on the other extreme, too clear in a reductionist way that does not recognize a certain impenetrability seemingly constitutive of them.

Of course such a fundamental shift from conceptual thought to experience requires and conditions in significant ways echoic revisions of various notions with which Hegel had worked. The notion of experience leads quite naturally to speaking in terms of an experience of God, with all that entails. It provides a concrete point of departure for further reflection on a move from finite to triadically structured inclusive infinite, a revised version and clear re-sounding of Hegel's notion of the true infinite. At the same time

it presents a way, especially in line with Dewey's Hegelian construction of experience, to retain the importance of conceptual thought by placing it within a wider context, namely, seeing it as itself a form of experience, a second experience.

The notion of experience brings with it a greater stress on the dialogically structured relationship between self and other as compared with the more dialectically understood and more sequentially developing relationship between them characteristic of Hegel's thought, especially in its form as movement of logical or pure thought. We find Hegel's ultimately more monosubjectively structured understanding of spirit recast in more intersubjectival or at least interrelational ways.<sup>17</sup> Otherness is now not only the first negation of an initial positive moment in Hegel's dialectically structured movement of spirit. It is equally negative as not being the self and positive as potential source of enrichment. So in working with experience we retain the Hegelian idea that self, and now other as well, develop each as in principle parallel dialectical movements. Here "dialectical" is understood quite generally as sequentially developing momentary attitudes, on the part of the self, in a sequence of attitudes of faith, hope, and self-giving love and, on the part of the other, in a sequence of progressively fuller self-manifestations as appearance, presence, and self-revelation. When the other is itself a self, these self-manifestations occur, as well, as moments of faith, hope, and love. These developments are dialectical in that the self or other go over into, appear as, and develop into their fuller selves. In this doubled movement of becoming, these moments recall in various ways the transitions Hegel refers to as characteristic, respectively, of the three spheres of his logic, namely, being, essence, and spirit.

Though Hegel works most fundamentally with the idea of subject, he treats of it more in terms of person in his philosophy of right and his philosophy of religion. Structurally, subject and person are for him the same. They are a dialectically developing movement from self to other to enriched return to the self. Stated in rather logical fashion, the movement is one from "in itself" (*an sich*) to "for itself" (*für sich*) to "in and for itself" (*an und für sich*). The notion of subject or person, understood in terms of enriching experience, echoes what underlies Hegel's own understanding of spirit as movement of conceptual thought. Hegel has variously conceived and described the transitions occurring in his understanding of the movement of conceptual thought. In the overall sphere of logic he describes the transitions from one thought category to another within the logic of being as the immediacy of "going over into an other" (*übergehen in ein*



*Anderes*) or perhaps better “having gone over into an other” (*übergegangen sein*). Within the logic of essence he sees them as the reflective form of “appearance in the other” (*scheinen in dem Entgegengesetzten*). And within the logic of the Concept he recognizes them as “self-development into the other” (*Entwicklung*).<sup>18</sup> These various forms of transition and the overall movement within which they occur reveal at their base a movement away from what something was to what it should be or, perhaps better, should become, to use the terms “was” and “should be/should become” rather loosely. Hegel’s dialectically developing movement of spirit and the varied forms of transition constituting it involve a movement “from→to,” which manifests the basic, underlying structure of what could today, in a more intersubjectival context rooted in the notion of experience, be called generous self-gift. It is this notion of generosity, more implicit in Hegel’s thought, that finds echo in the understanding of a subject or person as being such insofar as, in an enriching experience, subject or person achieves such enrichment, paradoxically, by bridging the gap between subject or person and other through a movement of self-gift to the other.<sup>19</sup> This movement of enriching experience is one in which the self is self-gift to the other. It ultimately structures my argument from finite to infinite. The overall understanding of experience with which this argument is made is the result of a transition from Hegel’s working with conceptual thought, through various stages of reaction to and transformation of that thought by diverse philosophers, to a more pragmatist understanding of experience. This understanding itself continues to resound with Hegelian insight. Now the argument moves from tetradically structured finite communal, shared, or individual movement of experience, formerly Hegel’s bad infinite as infinite progression and then Gadamer’s linguistically conditioned movement of experience, to a triadically structured inclusive divine infinite movement of enriching experience. This last is a rather strong echo of what Hegel called the true infinite.

Hegel’s move from infinite to finite is reversed. Now the movement is one from finite to infinite, on the basis of a reinterpreted understanding of limit. For Hegel limit was that which defined finitude as contradiction insofar as limit was immanent to it and yet through limit finitude was directed and forced out of and beyond itself (356). In the notion of finitude as tetradically structured movement of experience limit is now that which refers to the difference between self and other and which recurs simultaneously with the enrichment or impoverishment of the resultant self due to the recurrence of otherness. Limit draws attention not to the need merely to go beyond oneself but, ultimately, the need to situate oneself within

a triadically structured movement of enriching experience in which limit remains within the movement of experience and is non-recurrent.

Among further echoes of points and patterns more generally characteristic of Idealist thought, we could note continuing to work with Hegel's notion of subjectivity as a movement of becoming. But now that movement is more intersubjectival in its formulation while, with Hegel, not presuming or requiring the idea of a preexistent self as a form of substance. Working with the notion of a dynamic movement of subjectivity has made it possible to continue bringing together into one overall movement such themes as revelation, grace, kingdom of God now reign and realm of God, experience of God, and the like in a way similar to what Hegel has done with many of them. This way of considering God as inclusive movement of enriching experience avoids, as Hegel did in his own way, considering God in what might be called a more natural theology mode, namely, in abstraction from created reality. I have learned from Hegel, who stressed wholeness and integration. But I feel I have in a modest way more adequately stressed the perduring reality of otherness as both positive and negative than he seems to have done. More specifically regarding Trinity, this movement remains an ordered one and, to that extent also, an Hegelian echo. For Hegel the movement of Trinity occurred in variously structured syllogistic ways but proceeded overall as a movement from Father through Son to Spirit. In the present proposal, however, from the perspective of the self the ordered movement goes from Spirit through Risen One to God as goal, in a sense acknowledging the important New Testament reference to God as Jesus' *Abba*. With Hegel, the present proposal continues working in principle with an overall understanding of relationships among potentiality, actuality, and necessity which he rather marvelously interrelates in different configurations throughout his philosophy. Yet ultimately he structures his overall thought in that order, namely, potentiality, actuality, necessity. In the present proposal they remain related but the overall movement is one from necessity to actuality to potentiality.

My proposed understanding of Trinity as inclusive movement of enriching experience echoes, strongly but in a very modest way, much of what Hegel has in brilliant fashion worked out in so many different presentations. It proposes to go beyond him in a certain limited sense, while retaining the threefold structure of subjectivity characteristic of his as well as Fichte's and Schelling's Idealist thought. This threefold structure of Trinity now takes on more the character of an intersubjective movement and, as I have discovered in the course of the present study, might well at some point

profit from further review especially of Schelling's later trinitarian thought. A dialogue especially with Schelling, but along with further reflection on Hegel and his proposed syllogistically structured relations among the divine moments, would surely provide resources toward, for example, further reflection on potential relationships among the three divine Persons.<sup>20</sup> There is as well, I would think, considerable potential for further development of my proposal in light of what has been learned in reviewing so many great trinitarian thinkers as well as those to whom we have only been able to allude over the course of the present study. My Dewey-dependent understanding of first, second, and third experience, itself echoing Hegel's thought, may well provide a framework for working with Schelling and with various insights of these trinitarian thinkers, especially with regard to second-experience reflection. For the time being, though, the present proposal remains more strictly within the confines of what would seem to be able to be asserted on the basis of an analysis tied more directly to what has been called first experience. As it stands, the present trinitarian proposal surely sounds loudly with echoes of Idealist trinitarian thought but especially that of Hegel. In this way it gives witnesses to and exemplifies the continuing German Idealist trinitarian legacy.



Jenson, LaCugna, Bracken, all three quite boldly, and I to some extent, have dared to go where many previous trinitarian thinkers had not yet gone. In Jenson's, Bracken's, and my thinking and ways of proceeding we find rather more direct reference to German Idealist thought. Such reference in that of LaCugna is more indirect. In our thinking we subtly sense the continuing background, and indeed rather diffuse general influence, of German Idealist thought. In a somewhat more explicit way we feel the presence of what we could call modern personalist thought. And surely there lies at the base of such personalist thinking, sometimes more implicitly but often quite explicitly, a seemingly inescapable reference to and dependence on the notion and reality of experience. Jenson, LaCugna, Bracken, and I are, each in her or his own way, in effect rather more concerned with the concrete and the practical.

In particular, Jenson has told the story of a temporalized Trinity. His working, for example, with notions of time, plot, and a triadically structured and dynamically developing true temporal infinite bring to creative use what we can identify as various Hegelian and Schellingian insights.

LaCugna breaks with much if not most past trinitarian thinking when she for all intents and purposes works only with what we today often refer to as the economic Trinity. She reaches a strong conclusion that there is only one Trinity of divine and human persons in communion. She arrives at this conclusion in dialogue with Rahner, Macmurray, and Zizioulas who have, in turn, served to mediate to her various aspects of German Idealist thinking.

Bracken works boldly with a modified or, perhaps better, further developed Whiteheadian understanding of society and its constitution. He carries out that development, in part at least, by appealing to affinities between the thought of Schelling and that of Whitehead. In this way he stresses the notion that the subject is self-determining. He calls as well upon Hegel, whom he contrasts, compares, and presents in complementary fashion with Whitehead, to enhance his own understanding of the objective status of societies. He sees societies as totalities which arise out of self-determining, and thus self-constituting, subjects and which equally exercise a formal causality in relation to such subjects. He thinks of a society as a field, with the notion of field functioning for him as ground did for Schelling. Bracken brings these various Idealist-influenced strains of thought together into an understanding of Trinity as a panentheistic process society, an understanding which permits him to work at the level of a wide-ranging cosmology. This cosmology, in turn, serves him well in addressing more specific concerns regarding, in various ways, the relation between the one and the many, between God and the world, and among religions of the world.

I myself have proposed rethinking Hegel's claim that to think God as personal one needs to think God as Trinity. This rethinking has involved replacing Hegel's understanding of God as movement of thought with a notion of God as triadically structured movement of enriching experience inclusive of the finite, with this last seen as tetradically structured movement of enriching and impoverishing experience. The idea was that working with a more flexible notion such as experience rather than conceptual thought would permit learning from so profound a thinker while appreciating more the experiential roots of the affirmation of God as Trinity. It would as well make it possible to avoid some of the more serious objections raised against Hegel's way of conceiving God. These objections touch, among others, on areas related to Hegel's understandings of evil, freedom, and mystery. Perhaps this idea of an experiential Trinity more modestly, but then much more so Bracken's truly panentheistic process trinitarian society, LaCugna's single trinitarian communion of persons, and Jenson's true temporal infinite

represent signal achievements. They include creative reworkings, here called transatlantic echoes, of several basic insights brought forward especially by Hegel and Schelling. These echoes continue to reverberate in exemplification of, and consequently witness to, German Idealism's perduring trinitarian legacy.

## Conclusion

### *Idealism's Enduring Trinitarian Legacy*

The history of reflection on the experience and notion of God as Father, Son, and Spirit is marked by three major efforts to provide, in systematic form, a coherent and comprehensible understanding of Trinity. First, Eastern Church Fathers such as Gregory of Nyssa and Basil of Caesarea understood Trinity as one concrete substance (*ousia*) in the form of a triply realized concrete essence, namely, distinct persons (*hypostasis*). They in effect modified the Neo-Platonic view of reality so that Son and Spirit were on the same divine level with the Father rather than emanating, as the Neo-Platonic intellect (*nous*) and world soul (*psychê*) did, in a descending and deterministic way from the initial One (*hen*). With these modifications carried out in at least implicit dialogue with various philosophical traditions, the Eastern Church Fathers affirmed equality of the Persons in divinity and protected divine freedom and transcendence by saying that the Father freely sends the Son and the Spirit into the world. In shifting from a Neo-Platonic hierarchical view to a more horizontal one at the level of divinity, they created as well a space within which human freedom could be exercised.<sup>1</sup> Second, in Augustinian-Thomistic traditions there was a turn inward to the self especially by Augustine of Hippo to find analogies, or at least perhaps similarities,<sup>2</sup> with which to shed light on the relationships of origin of Son to Father and Spirit to Father and Son. Thomas Aquinas reflected on the second Person of the Trinity in relation to knowing as resulting in a word and the third Person of the Trinity in relation to willing as impulse and movement toward an object. In this way he came to a clear distinction between the processions of Son and Spirit within the framework of a concern for relations of origin. And he identified the divine Persons

themselves as subsistent relations distinct from the divine essence only by a distinction of reason.

Third, in something of a tectonic shift the Idealists proposed, in a systematic and formal way, to think of Trinity not from a substance-based understanding of reality but from one rooted in a dynamic notion of subjectivity. Hegel and Schelling would in a sense say they were simply bringing to explicit consideration the notion of self that is latent in previous trinitarian thinking when they in dramatic fashion highlighted the developing self as movement of becoming. They introduced in a systematic way the consequent notion of history as the history of God into their understandings of Trinity as movement of inclusive divine subjectivity, more monosubjectively formulated by Hegel and more intersubjectively structured by Schelling. They, but perhaps especially Hegel following after Fichte, formally and effectively freed themselves from the need to refer to a substantial substratum underlying that which was distinct in God, whether such distinction would be conceived as moment or potency or mode of being. This move permitted them to give primacy to the notion of relation and opened the door to a consideration of variously formulated mutual relationships between God and world in line with and culminating in the idea of the true infinite as inclusive whole.<sup>3</sup>

### Recalling the Idealist Trinitarian Adventure

To appreciate the continuing importance of the Idealist trinitarian legacy, it will be helpful to recall certain aspects especially of what Hegel and Schelling had proposed in their constructive reflection on the notion of Trinity as a dynamic movement of divine subjectivity constituting a truly inclusive infinite. We can do this in a certain form of *inclusio*, as biblical scholars would say regarding several phrases or points presented in one order and then more loosely or more strictly repeated in the reverse order to create a sense of completion and wholeness. So, after a few initial remarks, we will look at Schelling, then Hegel. This reversed-order repeating of selected elements of their previously presented trinitarian thought in chapters 1 and 2 will now after our longer review of various trinitarian thinkers in chapters 3 through 12 make it easier, perhaps also rather more spontaneously, to note elements in their trinitarian thinking indicating the influence of German Idealism on their thought. In addition to elements already brought to the fore in the present study, it may as well permit us to recognize further elements to which I have not myself drawn attention.

In speaking of the post-Kantian German Idealists, we referred in briefer fashion to Fichte's insight concerning the triadic structure of subjectivity and dwelt at greater length on Hegel's and Schelling's Idealist trinitarian thought. Hegel himself had argued that his own thinking on the notion and movement of spirit was the culmination of a movement more immediately from Descartes, with his emphasis on the thinking "I" to Kant and his idea of categories on to Fichte and his effort to deduce the categories from an initial "I." Surely Schelling considered himself, at least in his later thought, as having continued that longer trajectory, but now beyond Hegel. He placed greater stress on will and made explicit reference to facticity as starting point in positive philosophy and, consequently, to what we would surely today, in somewhat more complex formulation bringing together "subjective" and "objective," call experience.

Following upon Fichte's early initial insights into the triadic structure of subjectivity, Schelling and Hegel each developed an inclusive philosophical theology or philosophy of God. Each in his own way characterizes God as a dynamically developing, triadically structured movement occurring in and through history, the history of God. This movement toward a unity of human and divine brings the human into the divine and the divine into the human, enriching both. Each pushes this notion of the development of God considerably beyond what more orthodox traditional trinitarian thinking had embraced.

Schelling adventurously works out his presentation on Trinity within the context of his overall positive philosophy, including his philosophy of mythology and his philosophy of revelation. In his own unique way he proposes to affirm at the same time both the radical freedom and the personal character of God. He does this by insisting that God develops from an initial act of freedom giving rise to a first unity in the Father, including three potencies, to three divine Persons who, in their interaction through the Spirit, together ultimately glory in renewed and enriched divine unity. This renewed unity includes creation since, for Schelling, its development takes place precisely in and through creation. This movement toward renewed unity culminates in the free recognition by human persons that God is one God in three divine Persons. These three divine Persons are themselves then characterized by their ongoing, varied lordship of being, by spontaneity, free movement of will, and shared final glory. What for others might be a sign of dependence and lack of autonomy, namely, God's self-development in and through creation, is for Schelling the very means by which God exercises God's own freedom and reveals divine personhood becoming tri-personal.



Indeed, Schelling has proposed an understanding of Trinity in which he affirms both that the three potencies are present, as potencies becoming Persons, in each work and that there is a temporal succession to their presence to and in creation as a whole.

Of particular note is the way in which Schelling gives a philosophical reading of various Scriptural texts and of several trinitarian traditions, not all of which latter are generally considered orthodox. With regard to Scripture, he takes somewhat more literally various texts regarding, for example, the relationship between the Son and the Father. In these texts there is often an at least apparent tendency to emphasize the Son's dependence on the Father with regard to the Son's divinity. Schelling puts this dependence front and center, whereas many early trinitarian thinkers interpreted such texts within the context of and under the influence of their wider concern to affirm the equal divinity of the three divine Persons. With regard to earlier trinitarian and quasi-trinitarian traditions, he argues that we can really come to terms especially with those traditions which are not fully trinitarian only when we see them as constituent moments in a full understanding of Trinity.

In his understanding of Trinity, Schelling works with a good number of basic themes or notions which, in listing some of them, help us recall the rich complexity of his trinitarian thought. Among these basic themes we should again here mention being, facticity, positivity, ground, unity, freedom, will, spontaneity, potency, creation, revelation, nature, history, religion, personhood, and spirit. Yet, complex as that thought and numerous as these themes may be, he still seems to understand these various notions in a rather literal way and to apply several of them univocally to God and world.

Regarding, in turn, Hegel and the grand sweep of his thought, we should note that his dialectical and speculative reconceptualization of Trinity was his post-Kantian response to the problem of the one and the many or of the relationship between identity and difference. By means of this reconceptualization he was able to give content to the term "God." In his philosophy of religion he traced the development of the concept of God through the various religions of the world. That development culminated, in Christianity, in an explicit understanding of the trinitarian God as absolute subjectivity and subject, with the spiritual community becoming the locus of spirit's self-realization. He saw in the trinitarian divine self-othering and sublation of that otherness a movement of progression which is both development and enriched return, the principle and axis upon which not only the history of religions but history itself turns. World history is then, as has been mentioned, for Hegel the history of God. This trinitarian dialectic

is equally the principle of freedom, with freedom understood ultimately as logically necessary but truly self-determination. This dialectic is the reason why God can be the source of community and why God can be known. It is the justifying content of Christianity's distinctive truth claims as the religion of absolute subjectivity and freedom. Trinity, the content of the true religion, is divine self-revelation. According to Hegel, without a trinitarian structure to the divine there could be no true reconciliation in Christ. And God would be an empty name, one-sided and finite rather than inclusive and infinite.

Hegel's particular formulation of the concept of inclusive subjectivity meant he had to insist that truth could be mediated only by a content which was seen to be the other of itself and yet, indeed, was ultimately not other than itself. Or again, religiously expressed, in the God-world relationship God must be seen as inclusive of the world. Hegel gave logical expression to this inclusive relationship in his elaboration of the true infinite as the mediation of infinite and finite, and thus as inclusive totality. What he had termed the bad infinite or merely infinite progression had to go over into the concept of the true infinite in which the thinking of finitude would result in the transition to the infinite, and vice versa. For Hegel the true infinite is finally, in its speculative formulation, the process of mediation in which the infinite, having become finite, sublates itself as its own difference or finitude into its own self-affirmation. This resultant true infinite is the posited negation of negation. It is identity inclusive of difference, the one inclusive of the many. To be anything less than inclusive would be to remain one-sided and finite. It is this concept of the true infinite as concrete universal, inclusive totality, or absolute spirit which, as a movement from positive to its negation to the negation of this negation, permitted Hegel to integrate the positivity of religion, or positivity in general, into a notion of reason wider than that of the Enlightenment. For the Enlightenment, positivity had designated a form of particularity that could not be deduced from universal reason. Hegel integrated particularity, as the other of universality, into the overall movement of reason itself. In summary fashion, we can then note that Hegel works with a good number of basic themes or notions, which he brings together in his philosophically expressed reading of Trinity. Among these basic themes we should mention revelation, grace, the kingdom of God, salvation history as the history of God, alienation, sin, reconciliation, Christology, church and spiritual community, the Eucharist, presence of the Holy Spirit, and responsible social and political as well as overall ethical living. He presents these themes in one overall sequential

movement of thought. He is able to bring these religious themes together because he presents them as moments in the dialectical development of God as movement of inclusive divine subjectivity and, finally, absolute spirit.

Furthermore, Hegel grounded knowledge of God, Christianity's truth claim, and truth itself immediately in his reconceptualization of Trinity as movement of that self-determining divine subjectivity. In eliminating the need for a distinction in "immanent" Trinity between divine essence and divine person, he continued, perhaps we could say radicalized, the modern turn to the subject. He was able to avoid a Cartesian appeal to God to guarantee truth and certainty in knowledge by making of the trinitarian God the very structure of truth itself. He claimed to recognize in Trinity in general, and in the inner or immanent Trinity in particular, a congruity with his fundamental, speculatively formulated dialectic of positive/negation/negation of negation. In the Christian doctrine of Trinity he discovered the means to give religious expression to mediation in the self as concept. This was his philosophical response to alienation in his time. Hegel might well argue that in the future it would still be this philosophical response in the form of the true infinite as inclusive totality which, when appropriately adapted, would prove most fecund for a further reconceptualization of Trinity as the whole truth.

It would perhaps not be unfair to say, indeed now to repeat, that Hegel's thought in general and on Trinity in particular moves from possibility to actuality to necessity. In what strikes one as somewhat more complex fashion, Schelling's thought, especially on Trinity, moves from initial pure actuality to potentiality to realization of that potentiality in renewed actuality. It has been said that in their trinitarian positions Hegel represents a somewhat more modalist understanding of Trinity while Schelling borders on tritheism. Hegel would of course claim that he is simply presenting the true content of Trinity as a movement of inclusive divine subjectivity. Schelling in turn would argue that without real difference there would be no progress or development. These and so many other issues raised by Hegel and Schelling appear again in various ways in a good number of trinitarian thinkers from the time of Hegel and Schelling on into the twenty-first century.<sup>4</sup>

### Testimonials, Family Resemblances, Transatlantic Echoes

With their working out of a dynamic and developmental understanding of subjectivity, the post-Kantian German Idealists represent a major shift in

Western thinking from a more Parmenidian emphasis on the stability of being to a more Heraclitian dynamic of becoming.<sup>5</sup> Most if not all of those whose trinitarian thought we have reviewed have, each in his or her own way, continued this shift. They have, in many ways and to differing degrees, embraced various aspects of the agenda set forth by the German Idealists and worked negatively or positively with elements of Idealist trinitarian thought to develop their own creative understandings of Trinity. But the fact that we find their trinitarian thought drawing indirectly or even more directly on Idealist philosophical interpretations of Trinity does not in any way deny or denigrate their original, creative contributions to the ongoing exploration of the notion of Trinity. Nor does it reduce the importance of their calling upon a wide variety of other sources. It means, rather, we are acknowledging that progression in human thinking about the divine occurs through critical dialogue with various points of view. And, in the present case, that progression occurs in a special way in relation to the remarkable insights developed, and challenges in effect launched, by the German Idealists.

We can now recall, and by so doing in a way further ground our selection of trinitarian thinkers chosen for review, one or more aspects of the thought of each of them. In working more directly with Hegel and Schelling, Marheineke, Dorner, and Solovyov give testimony to Idealism's trinitarian legacy. They witness to the influence and resultant impact of post-Kantian German Idealist trinitarian thought already during the nineteenth century. Of the three, Marheineke was one who, with his 1819 study, may well in turn have influenced Hegel's own reflection on Trinity or at least reinforced Hegel's commitment to such reflection. As found in his 1827 study, his dialectic of thought and being reflected elements from the work of both Hegel and Schelling. Later on in the nineteenth century Dorner for his part also mediated between the thought of Hegel and that of Schelling, though he dialogued especially with Schelling and Schelling's approach to Trinity as he developed his ethical understanding of Trinity. He spelled out that understanding in terms of the relationship between necessity, perhaps a nod to Hegel, and freedom, surely a reference to Schelling. For Dorner, when necessity and freedom are appropriately related in the Trinity, it becomes the archetype and principle of Christian ethical personality. But several decades passed before Dorner's trinitarian thinking, and of course Dorner's famous notion of divine ethical immutability, would influence further trinitarian reflection in the twentieth century. Again later in the nineteenth century, this time in Eastern Europe, Solovyov showed great interest in both Hegel and Schelling. His trinitarian religious metaphysics,

a form of concrete Idealism, reflects the dialectical development proposed by Hegel but is closer to Schelling in its stress on will, facticity, and existence. His master's thesis, an early study of Western philosophy and especially that of Hegel and Schelling, served for generations as an important philosophical reference in Russia. His philosophy and poetry brought together in a notion of inclusive wholeness Idealist trinitarian insights with what has been referred to as the Russian sense of total-unity.

In their trinitarian thought Marheineke, Dorner, and Solovyov give clear testimonial to the influence of German Idealist trinitarian reflection. Especially Dorner and Solovyov helped assure that reflection's continuing influence into the twentieth century. Marheineke, but particularly Dorner and Solovyov, testify in at least three ways to the German Idealist trinitarian legacy. They refer directly and explicitly to the Idealists; their thought itself bears various characteristics of Idealist approaches to Trinity; they serve as a channel making such Idealist approaches available to those who follow after them. Indeed especially Dorner and Solovyov contribute to the ongoing development of an increasingly valuable legacy as they mediate Idealist trinitarian reflection to others coming after them, respectively, in West and East.

Among many great trinitarian thinkers in the twentieth century, Barth, Rahner, and Pannenberg surely stand out for the ways in which their trinitarian thought bears significant family resemblances with that of the German Idealists. It was indeed Barth who early on in the twentieth century began his definitive systematic theological reflection with Trinity, thus bringing Trinity to the fore in theology in a way similar to what Hegel had done in philosophy early on in the nineteenth century. Barth's trinitarian thought resembles in structure that of Hegel when Barth sees Trinity as a movement of divine subjectivity reformulated in terms of divine self-revelation, a notion more congenial to Protestant sensitivities than Hegel's notion of divine self-development. For Barth, the phrase "God reveals Himself as the Lord" gives rise to the trinitarian formula of Revealer/Revealed/Revelation, the threefold mode of divine being, in fact three modes of being. This trinitarian structure parallels that of Hegel when he spoke of "in itself," "for itself," and "in and for itself," though the way in which Barth sees it developing reflects more the thought of Schelling as mediated through Dorner. In line with Schelling and Dorner, Barth stresses will and decision.

In somewhat similar fashion to Barth's overall understanding of the trinitarian structure of divine self-revelation, a little over halfway through the twentieth century Rahner too works with a notion that resembles in structure and dynamic that of Hegel, namely, divine self-development. Rahner

does this when he speaks of divine self-communication, which is a notion more congenial than Hegel's to Catholic sensitivities. Rahner's twofold form of divine self-communication at the transcendental and categorial levels, respectively Spirit and Word, takes place as a movement of divine subjectivity. In this movement the Word, or other, arises from and as symbol of the Father, who is originating subject and horizontal absolute mystery somewhat akin to Schelling's notion of ground. The Spirit is divine self-gift transcendently present as inner enabler of human response to the Word present in history. In phrasing reminiscent of Barth and Dorner, Rahner refers to Father, Word, and Spirit as three distinct ways or manners of subsisting. He announces as axiomatic the idea that this economic Trinity is the immanent Trinity and vice versa. This axiom permits him to speak at the same time both of God in relation to us and God in Godself, surely an essentially Hegelian approach.

While appreciating many aspects of the trinitarian thought of Barth and Rahner, Pannenberg still later in the twentieth century takes a different tact in his presentation of Trinity. He proceeds in a way reminiscent of Schelling when he begins with an analysis of New Testament texts describing the various forms of interaction among Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He continues at some length with a discussion of various Patristic insights concerning relations among them. In rather Schellingian fashion he writes of reciprocally self-distinguishing divine Persons whose unity arises out of their interaction. In that interaction, each of the divine Persons acts in a way recognizable as giving concrete expression to the Hegelian notion that subject or person is constituted relationally as self-dedication one to another, in this case as one to the others. Along with Dorner and Schelling, Pannenberg stresses divine freedom and the continuing distinction among the divine Persons in their final unity as field of interpersonal love.

We want to acknowledge that these three individuals, namely, Barth, Rahner, and Pannenberg, are clearly creative thinkers who have each developed strikingly unique and overall internally consistent constructive presentations of Trinity. And yet it is in looking at these very presentations that we also easily enough recognize certain German Idealist family resemblances. Indeed the whole notion as such of family resemblances, with its idea of overlapping and crisscrossing similarities, presumes a concern with individuals who are themselves unique and different from one another. Their very individuality and differences serve as the condition making it possible for such resemblances to stand out and thus for identifying them. The various resemblances noted over the course of our study of Barth, Rahner, and

Pannenberg involve similarities, though in the context of our study not just mere similarities, with the trinitarian thought of what we here might call several of their intellectual ancestors from whom they have learned and by whom they have thus been influenced. We have as well noted such resultant resemblances with aspects of the thought of their more recent predecessors, with aspects of the thought of one another and, of course, with that of those who will follow after them and learn from them. We can well recall the dynamic and developmental character of Hegel's and Schelling's trinitarian thought variously developed in Hegel's and Schelling's understandings of Trinity as movement of inclusive subjectivity, an insight underlying in effect all that Hegel and Schelling say about Trinity. We see this fundamental insight taken up and playing itself out in different ways in the trinitarian thought of Barth, Rahner, and Pannenberg. Yet we recognize that it is this underlying family resemblance, among others, which characterizes each of their constructive reworkings of the notion of God as Trinity. It is this shared resemblance, with attendant further shared characteristics, that Barth, Rahner, and Pannenberg have passed on to future generations of trinitarian thinkers. In so doing, they reinforce the continuing post-Kantian German Idealist trinitarian legacy and contribute to its transmission to further generations of such thinkers, creating in effect a certain Idealist trinitarian intellectual lineage.

As we have seen, from the twentieth on now into the twenty-first centuries German Idealist trinitarian thought has as well influenced much constructive trinitarian reflection in the United States. This influence can be heard resonating in the thought of several thinkers as what we have called transatlantic Idealist echoes. These echoes took on quite varied sound reflected, for example, in the ways we referred to Jenson and his narrative Trinity, LaCugna and her understanding of one Trinity as communion among persons, Bracken and his panentheistic process trinitarian society, and me with a proposal of an experiential Trinity. They worked, each in his or her own way, with various Idealist insights, usually along with other references and dialogue partners, as they proposed rather unique and clearly distinguishable understandings of Trinity.

Jenson in effect no longer worked with an understanding of Trinity structured, as Hegel did, according to the logic of the concept but with one reflecting the logic of time. He replaced Hegel's conceptual plot with a narrative plot, ultimately describing the Trinity as true temporal infinite with the three divine Identities interacting along more Schellingian lines. He in particular envisions the true or inclusive infinite in strictly temporal terms.

Many if not most other trinitarian thinkers working with the notion of a true infinite tend to express their understanding of the true infinite, at least in its final expression, in more spatially imaged terms. LaCugna's trinitarian thought was influenced more indirectly by Idealist thinking through her drawing on others who themselves have been more directly so influenced. For example, she embraced Rahner's axiom that the economic Trinity is the immanent Trinity and vice versa in such a way as to affirm only one Trinity, that of the *oikonomia*. She appealed to the thought of Macmurray to anchor her insight that person is relational. And she identified with Zizioulas's assertion that person takes priority over substance. I have proposed that each of these three sources, Rahner, Macmurray, and Zizioulas, has mediated various elements of Idealist thought to her as she developed her idea of one Trinity understood to be an inclusive communion of persons, human and divine.

Bracken worked primarily with Whitehead, in a sense then in this way indirectly with Schelling by whom Whitehead seems to have been influenced. Bracken drew more directly on Schelling when he called upon Schelling's thought to reinforce Whitehead's notion of the free, self-determining subject. He drew upon Hegel's idea of objective spirit to strengthen the ontological status of the whole or society and, consequently, to attribute a stronger notion of formal causality to Whitehead's notion of a society. He picked up on Schelling's insight into the nature of ground as prerational, transforming it into his enriched understanding of society as a field arising out of the interaction of concreting subjects. In dialogue then especially with Whitehead but also importantly with Hegel and Schelling as well as so many others, Bracken concluded that each person, human and divine, is a form of personal society whose interaction gives rise to an inclusive cosmic society. In his panentheistic view, the God-world relationship takes the form of a cosmic society in which the three divine Persons and their creatures constitute ultimate reality. Finally, I myself proposed to rework Hegel's claim that to think God as personal one needed to think God as Trinity and to do this by working with experience rather than conceptual thought. The understanding of experience which I developed had itself been influenced at least in part by Hegel directly, with persons understood in the fullest sense as those who are generous movements of free self-gift. That understanding was further influenced more indirectly by Hegel through the impact his thought had on pragmatist notions of experience.<sup>6</sup> I have suggested that we understand Trinity as a dynamically developing movement of triadically structured enriching experience ultimately embracing finitude, with the latter itself being a movement of tetradically structured experience.



In effect, we experience Spirit and Risen One as being in relationship leading us to God as goal of our lives and, in so doing, we experience them as variously experiencing us.

Jenson, LaCugna, Bracken, and I myself more modestly, have in trinitarian reflections, each in his or her own way and to varying degrees, echoed aspects and elements of the dynamic and developmental understanding of German Idealist understandings of Trinity as movement of inclusive divine subjectivity. As previously mentioned this movement is realized in more monosubjectival fashion in Hegel and in more intersubjectival fashion in Schelling. Each of the four has, again in her or his own way, in effect understood Trinity as what Hegel called the true infinite, namely, the infinite inclusive of the finite.

Reviewing the trinitarian thought of Marheineke and a number of trinitarian thinkers following after him has permitted us to identify Idealist influences in their thought and, in so doing, to draw attention to the continuing post-Kantian German Idealist trinitarian legacy. That legacy takes the form of a continuing history of the effects the Idealists have had in and through creative appropriation of their thought by others coming after them in ever new historical contexts. Though this history is not one of unilinear development, it is cumulative at least to the extent, for example, that earlier post-Idealist trinitarian thinkers influenced by the Idealists themselves contribute further to the ongoing impact of Idealist trinitarian thought. They do this, and thus reinforce that impact, through their influence on trinitarian thinkers who follow after them. Awareness of this continuing legacy provides us with a historical background against which, and a contemporary horizon within which, to appreciate, indeed celebrate, the outstanding creativity manifest in the various forms of trinitarian thought to which we have made reference. That awareness helps us to embrace with deeper insight what we come to recognize as enriching insights provided by these many trinitarian thinkers into what is regularly enough spoken of as the mystery of the Trinity.

### A Challenging Legacy

Hegel's and Schelling's impressive reenvisionings of Trinity in a more dynamic and developmental mode pose, or at least at times greatly intensify, a number of serious challenges facing trinitarian thinkers following after them.

Many such thinkers have found it important to respond to these challenges and, in so responding, have in fact continued to bring them to our attention. They have thus helped assure that these challenges remain “out there,” so to speak, even today. These perduring challenges surely provide opportunities for future trinitarian thinkers to pay further attention to and continue addressing what are often difficult and complex questions as they work toward ever deeper understandings of the communal and individual experience of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Among such challenges facing those who would continue serious efforts to think creatively of Trinity, we can point out the need to:

1. return ever again to a fresh reading of Scriptural texts, and especially those of the New Testament, which witness to early community and individual experience of God as Father, Son, and Spirit;
2. develop an understanding of divine “self,” perhaps rooted in the notion of the expressivist self, which allows for coming to terms with the tendency in religious communities to address one God while praying as well directly to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a practice reflected to some extent in various more monosubjectival or more intersubjectival philosophical and theological understandings of Trinity;
3. reflect further, concomitant with challenge two immediately above, on how to relate divine unity to divine multiplicity and vice versa;
4. discover ways to speak of Trinity in the public realm while remaining committed and faithful to the notion that Trinity is in some ultimate sense a profound mystery;
5. envision ways in which Trinity can shed light on the structure and movement of reality without itself becoming a mere instantiation of such structure and movement;
6. find coherent and comprehensible ways in which to think of becoming and development in relation to God in such a manner that religious communities, their theologians and leaders can recognize those ways as helping them give faithful expression to what they experience;

7. examine ever anew the notion of God as Trinity in relation to questions of eternity, temporality, and history;
8. return in a creative way to the question of possible real relations, and the parallel notion of receptivity, not only on the part of created persons in relation to the three divine Persons of the Trinity but also on the part of these latter in relation to the former;
9. explore further possible ways of relating the assertion of divine and human freedom to the notion of Trinity;
10. recognize, as Hegel and Schelling did, each in his own way in his own day, that trinitarian philosophical and theological reflection must take into consideration the culturally and religiously pluralist world in which such reflection takes place today;<sup>7</sup>
11. reflect, in an ongoing way, on possible relationships between Trinity and universe (or universes) in light of the Idealist notion of the true or inclusive infinite, whether imaged in spatial, temporal, or other terms;
12. reflect, concomitant with challenge eleven immediately above, on the theme of creation and its groaning for trinitarian fulfillment, carrying out this reflection respectfully in the name of creation as humans who are in effect a self-aware side to creation;
13. continue to build upon the Idealists' insights into the importance of working with internally interrelated elements in furthering thought on Trinity, including, as a consequence, bringing together and treating in a more integrated way various themes such as kingdom of God, revelation, and grace in more dynamic understandings of Trinity;
14. explore whether, after having seen the Idealists and those following them work with notions of being, thought, and will, it would perhaps be helpful and indeed the next logical step to look further into the notion of experience which, as a more inclusive reality, might well serve to bring together various Idealist insights, along with insights from

older trinitarian traditions and Scripture, in a renewed and enriched, indeed enriching, understanding of Trinity and, consequently, of ourselves in light of that understanding.

Post-Kantian German Idealist thinkers, but especially Hegel and Schelling, have had an enduring impact on so many areas of thought and reflection including, in a special way, creative trinitarian reflection. They have forever changed the intellectual context within which such thought and reflection and, in particular, trinitarian reflection will continue to be carried out. Often enough they and their trinitarian thought seem to serve as a sort of lens through which more recent trinitarian thinkers review, retrieve, and even revise earlier reflection on Trinity. Their influence would seem to be rooted, in part at least, in the particularly impressive ways in which they dialogued with, critiqued, and modified various prior, more general philosophical traditions as well as more specifically trinitarian ones. But, of special note, beyond working with and modifying such traditions they themselves actually worked out their own original understandings of the dynamically developing movement of subjectivity with which they could then carry on their creative trinitarian reflection. This reflection continues to influence many who in our twenty-first century are exploring creative ways in which to further trinitarian thought. The post-Kantian German Idealists have indeed left a significant and perduring, in many ways enriching but likewise challenging, trinitarian legacy.



# Notes

## Introduction

1. Dale M. Schlitt, “German Idealism’s Trinitarian Legacy: The Nineteenth Century,” “German Idealism’s Trinitarian Legacy: The Twentieth Century,” in *The Impact of Idealism: The Legacy of Post-Kantian German Thought*, ed. Nicholas Boyle and Liz Disley, vol. 4, *Religion*, ed. Nicholas Adams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), respectively 48–68 and 69–90.

2. Here, given the subject matter involved, focus is on the German Idealists Hegel and Schelling, with initial reference to Fichte. Nicholas Boyle works with a more inclusive listing of Idealists: “The term ‘German Idealism,’ in short, means, for present purposes, the philosophical work of Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, and Schopenhauer, and—more controversially, perhaps—some components of the work of such major literary contemporaries of these as Goethe, Schiller, Hölderlin, and Friedrich Schlegel.” “General Introduction: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries,” in *The Impact of Idealism: The Legacy of Post-Kantian German Thought*, ed. Nicholas Boyle and Liz Disley, vol. 1, *Philosophy and Natural Sciences*, ed. Karl Ameriks (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 3.

3. Rev. William P. Clark kindly pointed out this reference to William of Ockham (c. 1287–1347), who, to put it very briefly and inadequately, stressed the value of parsimony with regard to assumptions in evaluating a multiplicity of hypotheses.

4. Usually “Trinity” without the definite article refers more to the notion of a triune God and “the Trinity” with the definite article refers more to the reality of the triune God.

5. Difficult as decisions regarding whom to include in the study may be, if three or so thinkers provided sufficient witness to the ongoing Idealist trinitarian legacy in a particular place and period of time it did not seem necessary to add further examples.

That being said, the cases of Jürgen Moltmann and Paul Tillich called for added consideration. These twentieth-century German, and for present purposes I

would include Tillich here, theological giants have clearly been influenced in their trinitarian thinking by the German Idealists. The question became one of whether or not including them would contribute further in a significant way to understanding the Idealist trinitarian legacy beyond what was exemplified by Barth, Rahner, and Pannenberg.

John W. Cooper remarks that "Jürgen Moltmann is probably the most widely known and popular contemporary Protestant theologian." *Panentheism: The Other God of the Philosophers, from Plato to the Present* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006), 237. Moltmann has been very well received and studied at length especially in the United States. His book, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1981), has been widely read. In addition to various earlier studies, also to be noted among his later studies: *Experiences in Trinity: Ways and Forms of Christian Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2000), 303–33; *History and the Trinitarian God: Contributions to Trinitarian Theology* (New York: Crossroad, 1992), with comment on 181 concerning *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*. And important as well, among others Moltmann's earlier volume, *The Crucified God: The Cross of Christ as the Foundation and Criticism of Christian Theology* (New York: Harper and Row, 1974).

Cooper, *Panentheism*, 237–58, provides a helpful discussion of the influence of Idealist thought, both that of Hegel and of Schelling, on Moltmann and especially in relation to Moltmann on Trinity. Samuel M. Powell has provided an easily accessible and very helpful overview of aspects of Moltmann's thought on Trinity. *The Trinity in German Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), esp. 193–202, 226–33, 248–53, with various references made here and there to and insightful comments on Hegelian and Idealist influences on Moltmann's trinitarian thought. Powell does not make reference to Schelling's possible influence on Moltmann. In the area of Trinity studies Moltmann has surely been influenced by Hegel despite the fact that he criticizes Hegel and especially Barth on Trinity. Moltmann disagrees particularly with regard to what he considers their monosubjectival approach to Trinity. Especially in *The Crucified God*, 246 with 253–54, he has creatively spoken of the notion of a suffering God, linking this notion with Hegel's idea of the trinitarian history of God inclusive of the crucifixion. In proceeding this way, Moltmann works with an idea at least in a structural way possibly traceable back to Hegel's idea of including a moment of negativity in the movement of dialectically developing logical or pure thought, which is for Hegel a philosophical reformulation of "immanent" Trinity. It is this dialectically developing movement of logical thought which provides the depth-structure underlying Hegel's representationally expressed reading of the crucifixion in Hegel's philosophy of religion. In a sense, then, the form, so to speak, of crucifixion would already be present in Hegel's philosophical reformulation of "immanent" Trinity. So far I have not been able to document such a possible reference to Hegel's logical thought in this regard either in Moltmann's work or in commentaries on it. In somewhat parallel

fashion to his referring to Hegel's philosophy of religion in relation to his position that each person of the Trinity suffers in the crucifixion, Moltmann also speaks, in the preface to *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, xvi, of Andrei Rublev's trinitarian icon: "Through their tenderly intimate inclination towards one another, the three Persons show the profound unity joining them, in which they are one. The chalice on the table points to the surrender of the Son on Golgotha. Just as the chalice stands at the centre of the table round which the three Persons are sitting, so the cross of the Son stands from eternity in the centre of the Trinity." In "The Hegelian Element in von Balthasar's and Moltmann's Understanding of the Suffering of God," *Toronto Journal of Theology* 14 (1998): 45–60, Brian J. Spence perhaps opens a way of referring to God's suffering as a somewhat more technical way in which Moltmann has worked with Hegel's thought. Spence proposes that the key to Moltmann's and von Balthasar's thought is "the notion [in Hegel's philosophy of religion] that the Incarnation has implications both for human history and the inner life of God" (p. 46). Spence then moves from Hegel's idea of the death of God to Moltmann's notion in which Moltmann speaks of the three divine persons rather than of "God," as Hegel does. In so doing, according to Spence Moltmann transfers the Hegelian idea of the death of God to his own notion of the cross as a window into the life of God who, as three divine persons, suffers in various ways. One could explore this approach further, but I would suggest that the here-proposed Hegelian idea of person as relation and self-othering underlying Moltmann's move is already discussed in our review of the thought of Barth, Rahner, and Pannenberg. It may well be that the specific notion of a suffering triune God, especially as applied in a particular way to each of the three divine persons, is more original with Moltmann than some commentators would suggest.

For remarks on the way in which Moltmann's Göttingen professor, Hans Joachim Iwand, mediated Hegel's thought to Moltmann, see M. Douglas Meeks, *Origins of the Theology of Hope* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974), 30–41, esp. 34–39. Concerning Moltmann on Trinity, one could also note Randall E. Otto, *The God of Hope: The Trinitarian Vision of Jürgen Moltmann* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1991), 175–98. And see the important study mentioning at times Moltmann in relation to German Idealism, Hegel, and, briefly, Schelling: Joy Ann McDougall, *Pilgrimage of Love: Moltmann on the Trinity and Christian Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), on Hegel, 49–50, where on the latter page I was happy to see she refers to "strong *family resemblances* [emphasis mine] between Moltmann's dialectic and German Idealism" as well as 95–97 concerning Moltmann and Hegel on the notion of "person"; on Schelling, 44.

In his often more generally proclamatory manner of presentation, especially in his later work, Moltmann shows in his trinitarian thought a good number of what we can identify as Idealist influences, whether of Hegel or Schelling or perhaps Schelling through various Eastern Christian thinkers. In regard to "proclamatory manner," one might note Powell's references to Moltmann's "assertions." *Trinity in*



*German Thought*, for example 199. But perhaps a better way to refer to Moltmann's theological approach, especially in his later years, is to speak of it as "prophetic." For an excellent, appreciative reading especially of the later Moltmann, see M. Douglas Meeks, "Jürgen Moltmann's *Systematic Contributions to Theology*," *Religious Studies Review* 22 (1996): 95–102, where he speaks of "two primary movements" in Moltmann's thought, namely, "*the experience of God in all things* and *the experience of all things in God*" (98, italics in the original).

A number of elements of Idealist influence noticeable in Moltmann's trinitarian thought will be referred to in our dealing with the trinitarian thought of Barth, Rahner, and Pannenberg. Such influences include, for example: stress upon divine revelation as divine self-communication (an influence exemplified in Rahner); stress upon revelation as such (Barth and Pannenberg); stress upon revelation and history (Pannenberg); stress on the history of Jesus as starting point for trinitarian reflection (Pannenberg); the Hegelian notion of person as relational (Pannenberg); the idea that the unity of the Trinity arises out of the interaction of the three divine Persons, already spoken of by Schelling (Pannenberg); the focus on mutual interrelations among the three divine Persons with, however, this interaction taking on the form of suffering in Moltmann (Pannenberg); the axiom that the immanent Trinity is the economic Trinity and vice versa (Rahner); divine self-differentiation (Pannenberg). For a somewhat comparative presentation of Moltmann and Pannenberg on Trinity, see Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, "The Trinitarian Doctrines of Jürgen Moltmann and Wolfhart Pannenberg in the Context of Contemporary Discussion," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Trinity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 223–42, esp. 235 on.

Tillich is, to say the least, a complex thinker. And it is true that he speaks openly of his working in theology with the thought of Schelling. One could review his explicit presentation on Trinity, "The Trinitarian Symbols," in his monumental *Systematic Theology*, vol. 3: *Life and the Spirit, History and the Kingdom of God* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1975), 283–94. There he treats of Trinity under the theme of "life," working with what is arguably a basically Hegelian structure but giving it a Schellingian cast. Powell, *Trinity in German Thought*, provides an easily accessible overview of Tillich on Trinity (180–83, 211–16, 240–43), with insightful comments on Hegel's and Schelling's influence on Tillich's trinitarian thinking (esp. 211–16 and 243). On Idealist influence on Tillich's thinking, see also Cooper, *Panentheism*, 194–212, with helpful bibliographic references on 195n7. On 206n60 Cooper cites Adrian Thatcher, *The Ontology of Paul Tillich* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 52–62 specifically concerning Idealist influence on Tillich's trinitarian thought.

Though Powell and others provide excellent insight into Idealist influences on Tillich's trinitarian thought, it would still not be easy to pin down further, so to speak, just what Tillich means by Trinity. He works with Father, Son, and Spirit as symbols and with somewhat complex distinctions such as the one between experiential revelation and doctrinal expression. It may well be that coming to terms with his

trinitarian thought would require a wide-ranging and more constructive review of all three volumes. In addition then to a certain ambiguity in Tillich's thought on Trinity as such, there are as well seeming ambiguities as to how he relates *Logos* and Jesus and how he can move from different experiences of the divine to a united divinity. Pan-Chiu Lai, *Towards a Trinitarian Theology of Religions: A Study of Paul Tillich's Thought* (Kampen, The Netherlands: Pharos, 1994), 154–59, notes several such aspects of Tillich's trinitarian thought which could be considered ambiguous. While it is not the purpose of the present study to provide a critical review of possible ambiguities in various thinkers, it would seem to be necessary, in treating of Tillich, to come to terms with them in some way. Ultimately, it would seem that Tillich's trinitarian thought remains underdeveloped and prolegomenic at least as regards the new form trinitarian doctrine (the more organized, reasoned presentation) should take today.

Powell writes in a somewhat similar vein: "The content of the doctrine is the vital matter and that which must be recovered; the doctrinal form, which is the product of human rationality and symbolic expression, may be amended or cast away if the historical form of the doctrine impedes its principal function. . . . Tillich, in the *Systematic Theology*, no more than adumbrated the direction such revision might take." *Trinity in German Thought*, 242. In a later study, Powell remarks as well that "a better account [than what Tillich has provided] of the Trinity is needed." Powell makes this remark in the context of his discussion of Tillich within the context of Powell's constructive reflection on "Creation and Trinity." See *Participation in God: Creation and Trinity* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2003), 51–55, with the quote on 54. In the third part of Tillich's discussion of "The Trinitarian Symbols," entitled "Reopening the Trinitarian Problem" (*Systematic Theology*, 3:291–94), Tillich writes: "Will it ever again be possible to say without theological embarrassment or mere conformity to tradition the great words, 'In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit'? . . . I believe it is possible, but it requires a radical revision of the trinitarian doctrine and a new understanding of the Divine Life and the Spiritual Presence" (292). We should note the more programmatic character of this third and last part of the section, "The Trinitarian Symbols." In a sense Tillich seems to be appealing to his whole systematic theology as a resource for further developing trinitarian doctrine for today. It might be of interest to point out that Leroy T. Howe, "Tillich on Trinity," *The Christian Scholar* 49 (1966): 206–13, proposes that Tillich's systematic theology is "essentially an exposition of the doctrine of the Trinity, a systematic interpretation of Christian faith whose indispensable foundation and structure is the Trinitarian formula, 'ecstatic' reason's most fitting response to the divine self-manifestation" (206). If this is the case, which it may be with certain further qualifications, we would in a sense have to do the work of bringing Tillich's constructive reflection on divine self-manifestation (in some sense Christ) and "ecstatic" reason (in some sense concerning Spirit) to more explicit expression in trinitarian terms. These remarks are of course in no way meant to deny, for example, the great value of looking further, in another context than the

present one, at Tillich's notion of "revelatory experiences" in relation to the notion of Trinity. For considerable further reflection on Tillich on Trinity, see *Trinität und/oder Quaternität—Tillichs Neuerschließung der trinitarischen Problematik/Trinity and/or Quaternity—Tillich's Reopening of the Trinitarian Problem*, ed. Gert Hummel and Doris Lax (Münster: Lit Verlag, 2004).

There are various elements of Idealist influence noticeable in Tillich's trinitarian thought which we will refer to in our dealing with the trinitarian thought of Barth, Rahner, and Pannenberg. We might, for example, note: the Hegelian movement of separation and return (Barth, Rahner, and Pannenberg, though Tillich works with this movement as a threefold dialectic of life rather than spirit, perhaps a nod, but also more than a nod, to Schelling); the role of revelation (self-revelation in fact) in relation to trinitarian thought, with the latter grounded in the former (Barth, Pannenberg), though Tillich limits revelation to "content"; and, the connection between God's selfhood and Trinity (Barth, Rahner, and Pannenberg). Powell says Tillich's notion of symbol may stand in relation to Hegel's notion of representational thinking while the linkage of Father with darkness and power would seem to reflect a more Schellingian than Hegelian approach.

## Introduction to Part 1

1. For a contextualizing overview of German Idealism, see Nicholas Boyle, "General Introduction: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," in *The Impact of Idealism: The Legacy of Post-Kantian German Thought*, ed. Nicholas Boyle and Liz Disley, vol. 1, *Philosophy and Natural Sciences*, ed. Karl Ameriks (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 1–16.

On the more general question of the relationship between Trinity and philosophy, see, for example, the literature-oriented discussion: [Erwin Schadel], "Epilog/Epilogue. Das trinitarische Problem und die Philosophie. Überlegungen zum Forschungsstand und Literaturbericht anlässlich des Erscheinens einer Trinitäts-Enzyklopädie," in *Bibliotheca Trinitariorum: International Bibliography of Trinitarian Literature*, ed. Erwin Schadel with Leonore Bazinek and Peter Müller, vol. 2, *Indices and Supplementary List* (Munich: K. G. Saur, 1988), 576–94. For primary and secondary bibliography on a number of the trinitarian thinkers referred to in this and the following chapters, see the various indexes in this volume 2 as well as the alphabetical listing in the first volume, *Bibliotheca Trinitariorum: International Bibliography of Trinitarian Literature*, ed. Erwin Schadel with Dieter Brunn and Peter Müller, vol. 1, *Author Index* (Munich: K. G. Saur, 1984).

2. Samuel M. Powell, *The Trinity in German Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 7; Cyril O'Regan, "The Trinity in Kant, Hegel, and Schelling," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Trinity*, ed. Gilles Emery, O.P., and Matthew Levering (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 256.

3. See, in general, Günter Rohrmoser, *Subjektivität und Verdinglichung: Theologie und Gesellschaft im Denken des jungen Hegel* (Gütersloh: Mohn, 1961).

4. The 1794–95 German text of the critical edition of Fichte's *Science of Knowledge*, *Grundlage der gesamten Wissenschaftslehre*, is available in *J. G. Fichte—Gesamtausgabe der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, Band 1/2, *Werke 1793–1795*, ed. Reinhard Lauth and Hans Jacob with collaboration by Manfred Zahn (Stuttgart: F. Frommann, 1965). However, references here are to *Johann Gottlieb Fichte's sämtliche Werke*, ed. J. H. Fichte, erste Abteilung, *Zur theoretischen Philosophie*, erster Band (Berlin: Veit und Comp., 1845; Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1971, reprint of the nineteenth-century edition of Fichte's writings), 83–328. The 1845 edition was accessed February 21, 2012, [http://books.google.com/books?id=sgJKA AAAcAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=twopa ge&q&f=true](http://books.google.com/books?id=sgJKA AAAcAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=twopa ge&q&f=true). English translation: *Science of Knowledge*, ed. and trans. Peter Heath and John Lachs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 89–286. The pages of the German edition of 1845 are helpfully provided in the left-hand margins of the English translation.

5. On this first principle, see Fichte, *Grundlage*, in *Zur theoretischen Philosophie*, § 1, pp. 91–101/*Science*, § 1, pp. 93–102.

6. On this second principle, see Fichte, *Grundlage*, in *Zur theoretischen Philosophie*, § 2, pp. 101–05/*Science*, § 2, pp. 102–05.

7. On this third principle, see Fichte, *Grundlage*, in *Zur theoretischen Philosophie*, § 3, pp. 105–23/*Science*, § 3, pp. 105–19.

8. See O'Regan, "The Trinity," 256. In regard to this trinitarian expression, O'Regan refers especially to Fichte's 1806 *Die Anweisung zum seligen Leben oder auch die Religionslehre*, the critical edition of which can be found in *J. G. Fichte—Gesamtausgabe der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, Band 1/9, *Werke 1806–1807*, ed. Reinhard Lauth and Hans Gliwitzky (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, frommann-holzboog, 1995)/*The Way towards the Blessed Life; or, the Doctrine of Religion*, trans. Willima Smith (London: John Chapman, 1849), accessed April 28, 2014, [http://books.google.com/books?id=s08EAAAAQAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=s08EAAAAQAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false).

9. For a brief summary of Hegel's presentation and evaluation of Fichte's philosophy, see Dale M. Schlitt, *Experience and Spirit: A Post-Hegelian Philosophical Theology* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), 36–37. In the present reference to Fichte I have taken several phrases from these pages.

## Chapter 1

1. On Hegel's interpretation of Fichte's philosophy, see Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Vorlesungen: Ausgewählte Nachschriften und Manuskripte*, vol. 9, *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie*, Teil 4, *Philosophie des Mittelalters und*

*der neuen Zeit*, ed. Pierre Garniron and Walter Jaeschke (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1986), p. 156 line 576 to p. 162 line 741 with endnotes pp. 392–96/*Lectures on the History of Philosophy: The Lectures of 1825–1826*, vol. 3, *Medieval and Modern Philosophy*, ed. Robert F. Brown, trans. Robert F. Brown and J. M. Stewart with the assistance of H. S. Harris (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990). The pages of the German edition are helpfully provided in the outer margins of the English translation.

2. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 9, *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, ed. Wolfgang Bonsiepen and Reinhard Heede (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1980), p. 409 line 37 to p. 421 end, hereafter referred to as *Phänomenologie des Geistes* and cited by page and line/*Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (New York: Oxford, 1977), p. 464 line 37 to p. 478 end, hereafter referred to as *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

3. For Hegel's presentation of Trinity in the 1830 *Encyclopedia*, see *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 20, *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse (1830)*, ed. Wolfgang Bonsiepen and Hans-Christian Lucas, with Udo Rameil (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1992), §§ 564–71, explicitly on trinitarian syllogisms §§ 567–71, hereafter referred to as *Enzyklopädie/Hegel's Philosophy of Mind*, trans. William Wallace (Oxford: Clarendon, 1975), §§ 564–71, explicitly on trinitarian syllogisms §§ 567–71, hereafter referred to as *Philosophy of Mind*. For a convenient parallel presentation of the English translations of Hegel's presentation of the revealed religion in the three original editions of the *Encyclopedia*, see John W. Burbidge, "The Syllogisms of Revealed Religion, or the Reasonableness of Christianity," *The Owl of Minerva* 18 (1986): 29–42.

4. Hegel's various lecture series texts are clearly identified in *Vorlesungen: Ausgewählte Nachschriften und Manuskripte*, vol. 5, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion*, Teil 3, *Die vollendete Religion*, ed. Walter Jaeschke (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1984), hereafter referred to as *Vorlesungen*, 5 and cited by page and text line/*Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, vol. 3, *The Consummate Religion*, ed. Peter C. Hodgson, trans. R. F. Brown, P. C. Hodgson, and J. M. Stewart with the assistance of H. S. Harris (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), hereafter referred to as *Lectures*, 3. The German edition pagination is conveniently indicated in the outer margin of the text of this English translation. Therefore, unless the English translation of Hegel's texts and lecture transcripts is quoted, generally reference is made only to the German edition. The corresponding English translation can easily be found by following the indication of the German pagination in the English edition. For bibliography by and on Hegel on Trinity, noting especially the by now classic works on Hegel's philosophy of religion by Walter Jaeschke and Peter C. Hodgson (for example, Walter Jaeschke, *Reason in Religion: The Foundations of Hegel's Philosophy of Religion* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990; Peter C. Hodgson, *Hegel and Christian Theology: A Reading of the Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005]), see Dale M. Schlitt, *Hegel's*

*Trinitarian Claim: A Critical Reflection* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2012), 349–70; Dale M. Schlitt, *Divine Subjectivity: Understanding Hegel's Philosophy of Religion* (Scranton, PA: Scranton University Press, 2009), 177–83 in notes, and more generally 315–27. See also Kurt Steinhauer, *Hegel Bibliography: Background Material on the International Reception of Hegel within the Context of the History of Philosophy*, 2 vols. (Munich: K. G. Saur, 1980, 1998), under the appropriate Keywords. For a brief, excellent overall presentation of Hegel on Trinity, see Powell, *Trinity in German Thought*, 104–41.

5. The distinction here is between the realphilosophical spheres of nature and spirit, on the one hand, and the sphere of logic as the movement of pure thought, on the other. “Realphilosophical” refers to all the spheres of Hegel’s systematically developed philosophy other than that of logic.

6. We can, in a sort of shorthand form and with important qualifications, speak of Hegel’s reconceptualization of Trinity in terms commonly used in contemporary trinitarian theology, namely, the distinction between “immanent” and “economic” Trinity. “Immanent” Trinity refers to distinction or difference within the divine itself. “Economic” Trinity refers to the externalization of this distinction in human history. Hegel regularly enough discussed what has thus come to be identified as “immanent” and “economic” Trinity.

Unless otherwise indicated, in the present chapter when we speak of “Trinity” we are referring in an inclusive sense to both “immanent” and “economic” Trinity. For a most helpful overview of Hegel’s discussions on Trinity see Jörg Splett, *Die Trinitätslehre G. W. F. Hegels* (Munich: Karl Alber, 1965), and esp. 78 on “immanent” and “economic” Trinity. Note that “immanent” Trinity will be used to refer not only to the first moment in the development of revealed religion but as well to Hegel’s logic as reformulation of the structure and movement of Trinity. For an example of the use of “immanent” and “economic” Trinity in theology, see Karl Rahner, *The Trinity* (London: Burns and Oates, 1970), esp. 21–24, 99–103.

7. Though the exact description, as here presented, of Hegel’s trinitarian thought as syllogistic is somewhat disputed, Hegel himself is cited in his lectures on the history of philosophy as saying, “Aber das Konkrete ist, daß Gott ein Schluß ist, der sich mit sich selbst zusammenschließt.” *Sämtliche Werke: Jubiläumsausgabe in zwanzig Bänden*, ed. Hermann Glockner, vol. 18, *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie*, vol. 2 (Stuttgart: Frommann, 1928), 253/“But the concrete is, that God is a syllogism, which brings itself together with itself,” *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, trans. E. S. Haldane and F. H. Simson, vol. 2 (New York: Humanities, 1955) 76, but translated here from the second Friends edition of 1840. The present translation is my own. The German text is cited by Hermann Schmitz in *Hegel als Denker der Individualität* (Meisenheim/Glan: Hain, 1957), 99.

Hegel stated explicitly though parenthetically in an 1829 book review that his thought on Trinity (*Dreieinigkeitslehre*, as the author of the book in question had referred to Hegel’s thought) was a “Schluß der absoluten Vermittlung mit

sich, den drei Schlüsse ausmachen." Review of "Über die hegelsche Lehre oder: absolutes Wissen und moderner Pantheismus," 2. "Über Philosophie überhaupt und Hegels *Enzyklopädie* der philosophischen Wissenschaften insbesondere. Ein Beitrag zur Beurteilung der Letzteren. Von Dr. K. E. Schubarth und Dr. L. Carganico," in *Berliner Schriften 1818–1831, Philosophische Bibliothek*, vol. 240, ed. Johannes Hoffmeister (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1956), 352/"syllogism of absolute self-mediation, which [syllogism] is made up of three syllogisms" (my translation), with the German text being cited by Schmitz in *Hegel als Denker*, 99.

8. On philosophy, see *Enzyklopädie*, §§ 572–77/*Philosophy of Mind*, §§ 572–77.

9. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 11, *Wissenschaft der Logik*, erster Band, *Die objektive Logik (1812–1813)*, ed. Friedrich Hogemann and Walter Jaeschke (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1978), p. 21 lines 16–21/*Hegel's Science of Logic*, trans. A. V. Miller (New York: Humanities, 1969), 50, hereafter referred to as *Science of Logic*.

10. In the 1830 *Encyclopedia* text the quote from Aristotle is found at *Enzyklopädie*, § 577/*Philosophy of Mind*, § 577. The English translation of the quote is that of Walter Jaeschke, "Philosophical Theology and Philosophy of Religion," in *New Perspectives on Hegel's Philosophy of Religion*, ed. David Kolb (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1992), 7.

11. In this presentation of Hegel's philosophy of religion I have chosen to emphasize somewhat more the speculative formulation of Hegel's movement of spirit as a generally triadically structured movement of thought. This approach seems to me to reflect what Hegel actually did in his philosophy of religion, and especially his philosophy of the revelatory or consummate religion. Certainly Hegel's thought is not that of a simple or mechanical exit and return. It is, however, in its overall fundamental speculative formulation, which undergirds his other formulations, one of ordered advance through posited otherness to enriched resultant and grounding return. For a brief and clear statement by Hegel, see his remarks on religion, on determinate religion, on the consummate religion, and concerning his generalization of this dynamic to the whole of scientific knowing (*Wissenschaft*) in *Vorlesungen*, 5:177.3–21 (1827 Lasson text).

12. For example, *Vorlesungen*, 5:254.80–89. See also the text following, *Vorlesungen* 5:254.90–105 and 255.136–256.141. Note that in view of *Vorlesungen*, 5:198.660–62 the third element, community, is to be identified as individuality or the individual. These three texts are from the 1827 lectures.

13. *Vorlesungen*, 5:199.690–215.73 with the overviews in 197.608–17 and 198.669–70. In the 1831 lectures Hegel will refer to this first element as the kingdom of the Father and to the second and third elements respectively as kingdom of the Son and kingdom of the Spirit. See: *Vorlesungen*, 5:280.67–281.96; 199–200 note to line 688.

14. On the categorical syllogism, see *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 12, *Wissenschaft der Logik*, zweiter Band, *Die subjektive Logik* (1816), ed. Friedrich Hogemann and Walter Jaeschke (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1981), p. 119 line 13 to p. 121 line 15 (hereafter abbreviated *Die subjektive Logik* (1816) and cited by page and text line)/*Science of Logic*, 696–98. On syllogism in Hegel's thought in general, see Dale M. Schlitt, *Hegel's Trinitarian Claim* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1984/Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2012), 100–06, (1984), 60–63 (2012).

15. *Vorlesungen*, 5:215.74–251.24 with the overviews in 197.618–198.645 and 198.671–199.678.

16. On the hypothetical syllogism, see *Die subjektive Logik* (1816), 121.16–123.31/*Science of Logic*, 698–701.

17. *Vorlesungen*, 5:251.25–270.520 with the overviews on 198.646–51 and 199.679–81.

18. *Vorlesungen*, 5:196.601–197.607.

19. We should note that Hegel values religiously expressed reconciliation in its representational form as the truth for all humanity. For example, *Enzyklopädie*, § 573 R, § 1/*Philosophy of Mind*, § 573 R, § 1. And already in the *Logic*, *Die subjektive Logik* (1816), 236.27–29/*Science of Logic*, 824–25.

20. On the disjunctive syllogism, see *Die subjektive Logik* (1816), 123.32–126.11/*Science of Logic*, 701–4.

21. *Logic* so italicized refers to the published text of the *Science of Logic*. “Logic” not italicized refers to the dialectical movement of thought determinations as Hegel proposes them in the *Logic*. At times the *Logic* will be cited according to Hegel's 1832 revision of the first part of the *Science of Logic*, the logic of being: *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 21, *Wissenschaft der Logik*, erster Band, *Die objektive Logik* (1832), ed. Friedrich Hogemann and Walter Jaeschke (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1985) (hereafter abbreviated *Die objektive Logik* (1832) and cited by page and text line). Unless otherwise noted, the translation in *Science of Logic* will be cited for both the original and revised editions of the logic of being.

22. *Die subjektive Logik* (1816), 25.29–33/*Science of Logic*, 592.

23. See Jaeschke, *Die Religionsphilosophie Hegels*, 89–90.

24. Here we will not discuss the question whether Hegel's reconceptualization of Trinity is more or less compatible either with the general Christian trinitarian dogma or with one or more specific Christian trinitarian theologies.

25. See especially at the end of the *Logic*, *Die subjektive Logik* (1816), 252.25–253.34/*Science of Logic*, 842–44.

26. Karl Heinz Haag, “Die Seinsdialektik bei Hegel und in der scholastischen Philosophie,” PhD diss., Johann Wolfgang Goethe Universität, Frankfurt am Main, 1951, 20–22.

27. On the questions of “tri-personal” and dyadic versus triadic interpretations of Hegel's trinitarian thought, see the helpful review and reflections with



further references in Jaeschke, *Die Religionsphilosophie Hegels*, 87–91. See also Splett, *Trinitätslehre*, 145–48.

28. E.g., *Die subjektive Logik* (1816), 236.3–20, 246.23–27, 248.14–16, 251.8–13/*Science of Logic*, 824, 835–36, 837, 841.

29. “Gott ist Geist d.i. das, was wir dreieinigen Gott heißen.” *Vorlesungen*, 5:16.419/*Lectures*, 3:78.

30. *Vorlesungen*, 5:150.667–69 (1824 lecture transcript). Hereafter the philosophy of religion lecture series will be identified by date.

31. *Vorlesungen*, 3:43.292–310 (1824).

32. See Hegel’s hand-written marginal note to § 35 in *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, *Philosophische Bibliothek*, vol. 124a, ed. Johannes Hoffmeister (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1967), 324. There Hegel wrote, “Hohes der Person, Höchstes Persönlichkeit—Gottes Persönlichkeit—Mag man an Gott glauben,—bestimmen, wie man will, fehlt Persönlichkeit, so nicht genügend”/“Sublimity of the person—highest personality of [is ascribed to] God—one may believe in or define the personality of God as one chooses—but lack of personality [is] not satisfying.” Translation of this difficult fragment has kindly been provided by Prof. Peter C. Hodgson, with as well my consultation of Prof. Robert F. Brown as suggested by Hodgson.

33. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Weltgeschichte*: Auf Grund der Handschriften herausgegeben, *Philosophische Bibliothek*, vol. 171b–d, ed. Georg Lasson (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1976), 722. See also Hegel’s remarks, within the context of his philosophy of world history, on the importance of Spirit as Trinity in *Vorlesungen: Ausgewählte Nachschriften und Manuskripte*, vol. 12, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Weltgeschichte: Berlin 1822/1823*, ed. Karl-Heinz Ilting, Karl Brehmer, and Hoo Nam Seelmann (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1996), p. 421 lines 444 to 464, and see early pp. 31–32/*Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, vol. 1, ed. and trans. Robert F. Brown and Peter C. Hodgson with the assistance of William G. Geuss (Oxford: University of Oxford Press, 2011), 448, and see 151.

34. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Weltgeschichte*: Auf Grund der Handschriften herausgegeben, *Philosophische Bibliothek*, vol. 171a, ed. Johannes Hoffmeister (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1970) 74. See also Hegel’s observation, namely, that Spirit can free itself only in history and in the present and that “what is happening, and has happened [in history] does not just come from God but is God’s work” (“das, was geschehen ist und geschieht, nicht nur von Gott kommt, sondern Gottes Werk ist”) in *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Weltgeschichte 1822/1823*, p. 521 lines 381 to 385/*Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, vol. 1, 521. As Brown and Hodgson succinctly put it, “Historical events are objectifications of spirit in interaction with nature, yielding the history of the consciousness of freedom. The latter . . . also constitutes a theodicy, for the progress of freedom is the work of God in history,” Editorial Introduction to Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, vol. 1, p. 6.

35. E.g., *Vorlesungen*, 5:265.390–266.424 (1827).
36. Note the variously stated dialectical interrelationship between spirit and community, *Enzyklopädie*, § 554 with Remark/*Philosophy of Mind*, § 554 with Remark; and, for example, *Vorlesungen*, 5:78.142–48 (1821).
37. *Vorlesungen*, 5:265.406–266.424 (1827).
38. For example, *Vorlesungen*, 5:79.178–87 (1821).
39. *Vorlesungen*, 5:193.496–513 (1827).
40. For example: *Vorlesungen*, 5:5.106–10 (1821); *Vorlesungen*, 5:106.228–107.266 (1824).
41. *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, 405.16–25/*Phenomenology of Spirit*, 459; *Enzyklopädie*, § 564/*Philosophy of Mind*, § 564.
42. *Vorlesungen*, 5:250.995–251.9 (1827).
43. God as totality is spirit, *Vorlesungen*, 5:281.97–282.109 (1831?). More philosophically formulated, *Enzyklopädie*, §§ 8, 74/*Philosophy of Mind*, §§ 8, 74.
44. *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, 427.28–31/*Phenomenology of Spirit*, 485; *Enzyklopädie*, § 571 with Remark/*Philosophy of Mind*, § 571 with Remark.
45. *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, 18.3–5/*Phenomenology of Spirit*, 10. In his critical review of previous thinkers Hegel often incorporates into and situates in his own thought, that is, into his conception of the movement of spirit, insights developed by those thinkers. He has here, then, incorporated substance into and as moment, so to speak, in the development of spirit as subject. It is to this that reference will be made later on when it is said that Hegel thinks of Trinity in terms of subject and not in terms of a perduring, underlying substance.
46. *Enzyklopädie*, § 74/*Philosophy of Mind*, § 74.
47. On finite and infinite as thought determinations in the movement of pure thought, see *Die objektive Logik* (1832), 104.19–137.15/*Science of Logic*, 116–50, and for a summary, see Schlitt, *Hegel's Trinitarian Claim*, 252–67 (1984), 162–74 (2012).
48. *Die objektive Logik* (1832), 135.35–136.2/*Science of Logic*, 148.
49. As Cyril O'Regan has put it recently, "Hegel is convinced that it [the trinitarian meta-narrative] provides the religious form of apprehending the unification of a reality marked by history, difference and contradiction." "Aesthetic Idealism and Its Relation to Theological Formation," in *The Impact of Idealism: The Legacy of Post-Kantian German Thought*, ed. Nicholas Boyle and Liz Disley, vol. 4, *Religion*, ed. Nicholas Adams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 148.

## Chapter 2

1. On Schelling's critique of Hegel, see, for example, the discussion somewhat more favorable to Hegel in Walter Jaeschke, *Reason in Religion: The Foundations*

of *Hegel's Philosophy of Religion*, trans. J. Michael Stewart and Peter C. Hodgson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 415–21.

2. Malte Dominik Krüger, *Göttliche Freiheit: Die Trinitätslehre in Schellings Spätphilosophie* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 146n91. Krüger locates Schelling's critique of Hegel more precisely in the transition Schelling makes from negative philosophy to positive philosophy.

3. See, for example, briefly in Douglas Hedley, Review of *Göttliche Freiheit: Die Trinitätslehre in Schellings Spätphilosophie* by Malte Dominik Krueger, in *Modern Theology* 27 (2011): 193–94 and in more detail in Saitya Brata Das, "Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling (1775–1854)," in *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, accessed March 2, 2012, <http://www.iep.utm.edu/schellin/#SH2d>. In presenting an overview of Schelling's later trinitarian thought I have, in reading Schelling, followed the steps indicated in the development of that thought by, and taken guidance first and foremost from, Krüger, *Göttliche Freiheit*. Krüger's study includes full bibliography and extended discussion of relevant historical, textual, and systematic studies. A particularly insightful work is that of Walter Kasper, *Das Absolute in der Geschichte: Philosophie und Theologie der Geschichte in der Spätphilosophie Schellings* (Mainz: Matthias-Grünewalt, 1965), with a longer review of Schelling's thought, over the course of Schelling's career, on time, 241–65, and on Trinity, 266–84, along with helpful remarks on 266–69 situating Schelling in relation to the context of discussion on Trinity, or lack thereof, around the beginning of Schelling's career. In the course of this brief presentation, Kasper insightfully proposes that Schelling will have transformed Kant's consideration of Trinity in "moral" terms as the last condition of the possibility of ethical activity ("die letzte Bedingung der Möglichkeit sittlichen Handelns," 267) into the process of world history ("Was bei Kant der Prozeß des moralischen Selbstbewußtseins war, wird hier zum Prozeß der Weltgeschichte" [268]). Also most helpful: Émile-Alfred Weber, *Examen critique de la philosophie religieuse de Schelling* (Strasburg: Truttel et Wurtz, 1860), 36–73, accessed March 4, 2012, [http://books.google.com/books?id=ncwGAAAacAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=ncwGAAAacAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false); Emilio Brito, "Trinité et création: l'approche de Schelling," *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 62 (1986): 66–88, who provides reference to several classic studies on Schelling on God; Cyril O'Regan, "The Trinity in Kant, Hegel, and Schelling," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Trinity*, ed. Gilles Emery, O.P., and Mathew Levering (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 262–65. For further studies on Schelling on Trinity, see *Bibliotheca Trinitariorum: International Bibliography of Trinitarian Literature*, ed. Erwin Schadel with Leonore Bazinek and Peter Müller, vol. 2, *Indices and Supplementary List* (Munich: K. G. Saur, 1988), 256. On Schelling on Trinity, see also the succinct discussion in Sisto J. Garcia, "Seminar on Trinitarian Theology," in *Catholic Theological Society of America: Proceedings* 48 (1993): 137–42, with discussion on Schelling on 139–42. And note Peter Tawny, *Die Zeit der Dreieinigkeit: Untersuchungen zur Trinität bei Hegel und Schelling* (Würzburg: Königshausen &

Neumann, 2002), 111–83; a more general, contextualizing consideration of Trinity in Schelling: Malte Dominik Krüger, “Rationality and Freedom: Schelling’s Later Philosophy,” *Sic et Non* 12 (2010): 1–13, accessed April 25, 2013, <http://journ.sicetnon.org/index.php/sic/article/view/24>.

4. Brito, “Trinité et création,” 67–69, provides a helpful summary of Schelling’s trinitarian thought as found in *Die Weltalter: Fragmente; In den Urfassungen von 1811 und 1813*, ed. Manfred Schröter (Munich: Beck, 1946). Kasper, *Das Absolute in der Geschichte*, 269–71, 272, discusses Trinity in *Die Weltalter* with special interest in what he refers to as Schelling’s “many surprising insights” (“*manche überraschende Einsicht*”), including reference to the nature of divine unity achieved through Trinity and the characterizing of Father, Son, and Spirit in relationship to time as past, present, and future.

An English translation, *Schelling: The Ages of the World*, trans. with Introduction and Notes by Frederick de Wolfe Balman, Jr. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1942), accessed March 7, 2012, <http://www.archive.org/stream/agesoftheworld032250mbp#page/n7/mode/2up>. John W. Cooper, *Panentheism: The Other God of the Philosophers; From Plato to the Present* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006), 103n53, cites these further translations: *The Ages of the World* (3rd version, 1815), trans. Jason M. Wirth (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2000) and *The Ages of the World* (2nd draft, 1813), trans. Judith Norman, in Slavoj Žižek, *The Abyss of Freedom/Ages of the World* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997).

For a wider presentation of Schelling on God, see Rowland Gray-Smith, “God in the Philosophy of Schelling: A Dissertation in Philosophy Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the University of Pennsylvania” (Philadelphia, PA, 1933); and more specifically on God in Schelling’s later thought, Klaus Hemmerle, *Gott und das Denken nach Schellings Spätphilosophie* (Freiburg: Herder, 1968). Hemmerle’s volume follows a method of “thinking with” (*Mitdenken*, 5, 323), but does not focus on Trinity as such (228), which theme is really only mentioned more directly on 278–87. For an almost meditative recounting of the development of the notion of God in Schelling’s thought from the early Schelling through the later Schelling, in which Walter Kasper brings together questions of pantheism, monotheism, and the three potencies as he reviews Schelling moving to an understanding of God as free Lord of being, creation, and history, see *Das Absolute in der Geschichte*, 187–215.

5. Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling, *Urfassung der Philosophie der Offenbarung*, ed. Walter E. Ehrhardt (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1992), published in the *Philosophische Bibliothek*, vols. 445a and 445b with continuous pagination, hereafter usually cited by page and text line in the text and regularly referred to as *Urfassung*.

6. On the importance and reliability of this text, see Walter E. Ehrhardt, Nachwort des Herausgebers in Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling, *Urfassung der Philosophie der Offenbarung*, Teilband 2, *Philosophische Bibliothek*, Band 445b, ed.

Walter E. Ehrhardt (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1992), 729–42; Krüger, *Göttliche Freiheit*, 25–29.

7. Following the lead of Krüger, *Göttliche Freiheit*, 16–29, 97–98, I will work with Schelling's lectures on the philosophy of revelation as found in *Urfassung*. Though trinitarian thinkers before 1992 would normally have been more familiar with the 1841–42 text and not with the *Urfassung* text, the latter is a more reliable text of reference. The two versions are sufficiently coherent to permit moving from the *Urfassung* to a consideration of possible Schellingian influences on later trinitarian thinkers who generally have worked with later lecture versions. Xavier Tilliette witnesses to the continuity in Schelling's philosophy of revelation: "Le cours a été professé sous ce titre [philosophie de la révélation] à partir de 1831. Il n'a subi ensuite que de remaniements mineurs . . . Les thèses principales étaient fixes et formulées dès la première présentation, comme le confirme le témoignage de Hamberger." *Schelling: Une philosophie en devenir*, vol. 2, *La dernière philosophie 1821–1854* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1970), 435, and see 447, 449. Tilliette cites Schelling himself, who affirms the continuity in his presentations of the philosophy of revelation from 1831 on: "Je déclare que je n'ai rien enseigné [concernant la philosophie de la révélation] qui ne l'ait été également dans les années 1831, 1832 et suivantes." Tilliette, *La dernière philosophie*, 435–36/"I declare that I have not taught anything [concerning the philosophy of revelation] that was not equally [taught] in the years 1831, 1832 and following." My translation, based on Tilliette's French text and the German original: "Ich erkläre deßhalb daß ich nichts vorgetragen, was nicht in den Jahren 1831, 1832 und des folgenden ebenso vorgetragen worden." Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling, *Sämmtliche Werke*, Teil 2, Band 4, *Philosophie der Offenbarung* (Stuttgart: J. G. Cotta'schen Verlag, 1858), 232, accessed November 3, 2013, [http://books.google.de/books?id=V\\_MGAAAAcAAJ&printsec=frontcover&hl=de&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.de/books?id=V_MGAAAAcAAJ&printsec=frontcover&hl=de&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false). In his introduction in *Schelling: Une philosophie en devenir*, vol. 1, *Le système vivant 1794–1821* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1970), 11–17, Tilliette provides a helpful overview of the shifting evaluation of Schelling from someone seen as zigzagging, so to speak, from one position to another on to the more recent emphasis on continuity in his thought, followed by an extensive review of "Schellingian Research" (21–55). He remarks more specifically (13–14) concerning the importance of giving due weight to Schelling's own evaluations of continuity and development in his thought.

8. The Paulus text is available in *Philosophie der Offenbarung* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, [1993] 1977). Among the various printings of this volume, that whose ISBN is 978-3-518-27781-2, includes Kierkegaard's notes on Schelling's lectures. These notes provide an interesting reading of the lectures that is relatively easy to follow: "Kierkegaards Nachschrift der Schelling-Vorlesung von 1841," 391–467. There is also the earlier, collected-works text of these lectures in *Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schellings sämmtliche Werke*, zweite Abtheilung, dritter Band and vierter Band, *Philosophie der Offenbarung* (Stuttgart: J. G. Cotta, 1858). They are

often referred to respectively as vols. 13 and 14, accessed March 14, 2012, vol. 13, [http://books.google.com/books?id=CVIPAQAAMAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=CVIPAQAAMAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false), and vol. 14, [http://books.google.com/books?id=Fc2FqJALccgC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=Fc2FqJALccgC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false). Schelling's philosophy of revelation lectures will also be included in the *Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, 40 Bände (Reihe 1, *Werke*; Reihe 2, *Nachlass*; Reihe 3, *Briefe*), hrsg. im Auftrag der Schelling-Kommission der *Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* v. Thomas Buchheim, Jochem Hennigfeld, Wilhelm G. Jacobs, Jörg Jantzen, and Siegbert Peetz (Stuttgart-Bad Canstatt: Fromman-Holzboog, 1976ff).

9. Here and in the following analyses of the structure and development of the 1831–32 lectures we are, as previously mentioned, following Krüger, *Göttliche Freiheit*, 157–61 and 200–18.

10. Indications of pages and text lines of each of the seven steps in Schelling's presentation on Trinity follow those of Krüger. The delineation of texts indicating the parameters within which a specific step in Schelling's presentation is to be found do not necessarily coincide with the full texts of the chapters concerned.

11. In a wide-ranging and imaginative article referring to Schelling in a more general way, Bradley A. Johnson speaks of Schelling's "unthought subjectivity." "Original Voice, Original Sin: Friedrich Schelling, Self-Becoming, and the Implications for Aesthetic Theology," *The Journal of Religion* 89 (2009): 165–86, with reference on 174.

12. Earlier on in these lectures Schelling had worked out a specific understanding of these potencies. See, for example, lecture 14, *Urfassung*, 82.3–88.32. He refers to the three potencies respectively as "*sein Könnendes*," "*sein Müssendes*," and "*sein Sollendes*," *Urfassung*, 86.18–20. These three terms are translated respectively as "potential existence," "necessary existence," and "proposed existence" by Alfred Cave in his translation of Isaak August Dorner's *A System of Christian Doctrine*, revised edition in 4 vols., trans. Alfred Cave and J. S. Banks (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1888–1891; vol. 1, 1888). For fuller discussion on potencies, see Krüger, *Göttliche Freiheit*, 123–54. Philip Clayton, however, claims that Schelling's presentations of the potencies has varied, and refers to further extensive secondary studies in his book, *The Problem of God in Modern Thought* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 487n35.

13. Krüger, *Göttliche Freiheit*, 159.

14. Krüger, *Göttliche Freiheit*, 207.

15. For a fuller listing of Scripture texts cited by Schelling, see Krüger, *Göttliche Freiheit*, 209n59.

16. Krüger, *Göttliche Freiheit*, 212n71 recognizes that Schelling does not explicitly draw this conclusion.

17. This summary of the first part of the fifth step is taken from *Urfassung*, 181.30–186.4.

18. “Der Vater . . . ist auch jetzt im gewordenen Selbst der ganze Gott, wo er in sein Ansich zurückgebracht den Sohn und Geist besitzt. Der Sohn ist nicht mehr Potenz des Sohnes, . . . er ist der ganze Gott. Dies muß vom Geiste ebenfalls der Fall sein. Also . . . ist der actus purissimus, das wirkliche Selbst wieder hergestellt, nur mit dem Unterschiede, . . . daß die drei Gestalten jetzt drei Persönlichkeiten sind . . . drei *verschiedene* Namen derselben *absoluten* Persönlichkeit. Die drei Persönlichkeiten sind nicht verschiedene Götter; denn das Wesen, die Substanz, ist immer dieselbe. . . . Und doch sind sie nicht bloß 3 verschiedene Bezeichnungen oder drei verschiedene subjektive Ansichten eines und desselben Gottes, sondern sie sind drei objektive Unterscheidungen. . . . Während des Prozesses jeder, jede Potenz, für sich selbständig war. Diese Selbständigkeit geht in der Einheit nicht verloren. Jeder tritt mit dem subjektiven Charakter in die Einheit zurück. Dies ist die höchste Steigerung der Dreieinigkeit = Idee.” This and other translations from Schelling’s rather elegant German in the *Urfassung* are my own.

More specifically on Schelling’s understanding of person in relation to Trinity, see Krüger, *Göttliche Freiheit*, 275–83, where he focuses on Schelling’s notion of the Father as person, with the Father then taking on the role of what we would call “immanent” Trinity. In this way for Schelling, according to Krüger, “immanent” Trinity becomes the “economic” Trinity (281).

19. “Er muß gedacht werden in der Potenz des Vaters als der im ausschließlichen Sein Hervortretende—in der Potenz des Sohnes als der das ausschließliche Sein Überwindende—in der Potenz des Geistes als der das Sein Bekräftigende und Vollendende.”

20. “Aus ihm und durch ihm und zu [ihm] sind alle Dinge.” *Urfassung*, 207.9–10 with note at line 35.

21. On Schelling’s complex, and not merely linear, linkage of the three divine potencies respectively with past, present, and future, see, for example, Walter Schöpsdau, “Zeitlichkeit und Trinität: Theologische Anmerkungen zur Zeittheorie Schellings,” *Evangelische Theologie* 38 (1978): 37–61, esp. from 1811 on, 45–61; Tawny, *Die Zeit der Dreieinigkeit*, esp. 120–28; also briefly, Krüger, *Göttliche Freiheit*, 196–97, 217–18, and 219. On the question of time more generally in Schelling, see Kasper, *Das Absolute in der Geschichte*, 241–65, and in particular concerning Schelling’s later philosophy, 259–65. See also, Drew M. Dalton, “Being and Time for Schelling: An Exploration of Schelling’s Theory of Temporality and Existence,” *Idealistic Studies* 38 (2008): 175–84.

22. “Der Tag der Herrlichkeit ist der Tag der gemeinschaftlichen Verherrlichung.”

23. “Der Strahl der Gottheit, der in allen andern Geschöpfen schief einfällt, fällt im Menschen senkrecht ein, so daß er Mensch das vergottete Geschöpf ist.”

24. More especially on “ground” throughout Schelling’s thought, see Miklós Vető, *Le fondement selon Schelling* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1977). And note Vető’s reflection on Schelling’s notion of “ground” as critiqued by Schelling’s contemporaries

and in relation to the thought of Kant and Fichte, “Le fondement selon Schelling: une interprétation partielle,” *Revue philosophique de Louvain* 70 (1972): 393–403, accessed February 9, 2014, [http://www.persee.fr/web/revues/home/prescript/article/phlou\\_0035-3841\\_1972\\_num\\_70\\_7\\_5683](http://www.persee.fr/web/revues/home/prescript/article/phlou_0035-3841_1972_num_70_7_5683). Joseph A. Bracken provides an extensive review and analysis of Schelling’s thought on freedom and causality from 1809 on, in which he concludes that Schelling’s varied “double presentations” such as, for example, the “philosophy of mythology” and the “philosophy of revelation” in Schelling’s later philosophy of religion are respectively characterized as “ground” (*Grund*) and “result” (*Folge*), a pattern Schelling follows regularly in his reflection from 1809 on. In each case so characterized, it would seem the result arises out of a free decision which cannot be deduced from the ground by reason as such; otherwise it would not be free. Bracken provides a final summary of this insight as follows: “Denn der erste Teil seines jeweiligen Denksystems wird regelmäßig als der notwendige ‘Grund’ einer freien Handlung Gottes oder des Menschen dargestellt, aber die Tat selbst muß nach Schellings Ansicht von diesem ‘Grund’ unabhängig sein, um ihre Wirklichkeit als seine freie Handlung aufrechtzuerhalten. Ebenso wird der zweite Teil desselben Denksystems von Schelling doppeldeutig aufgefaßt: einerseits als die notwendige ‘Folge’ des ersten Teils des Denksystems und andererseits als die freie ‘Folge’ der jeweiligen Handlung Gottes oder des Menschen in der Geschichte.” *Freiheit und Kausalität bei Schelling* (Freiburg: Karl Alber, 1972), 122.

25. See Dale M. Schlitt, *Experience and Spirit: A Post-Hegelian Philosophical Theology* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), 29–40 and 53–55, with references to Hegel’s lectures on the history of philosophy.

26. O’Regan, “The Trinity,” 265.

27. Karl Barth, *Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century: Its Background and History* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1973), 421.

28. Brito, “Trinité et création,” 87.

## Introduction to Part 2

1. For a contextualizing overview of German Idealism’s impact especially on nineteenth-century central European intellectual development, see Nicholas Boyle, “General Introduction: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries,” in *The Impact of Idealism: The Legacy of Post-Kantian German Thought*, ed. Nicholas Boyle and Liz Disley, vol. 1, *Philosophy and Natural Sciences*, ed. Karl Ameriks (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), particularly 16–21.

2. Samuel M. Powell, “Nineteenth-Century Protestant Doctrines of the Trinity,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the Trinity*, ed. Gilles Emery, O.P., and Matthew Levering (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 267–80, with the quote on 269. In addition to this essay, see the following studies focusing on Trinity in nineteenth-century thought: Samuel M. Powell, “The Doctrine of the Trinity in Nineteenth-



Century German Protestant Theology: Philipp Marheineke, Isaak Dorner, Johann von Hofmann, and Alexander Schweizer,” PhD diss., Claremont Graduate School, 1987; Samuel M. Powell, *The Trinity in German Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), esp. 104–72; Christine Helmer, “Between History and Speculation: Christian Trinitarian Thinking after the Reformation,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Trinity*, ed. Peter C. Phan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 149–69; Aidan Nichols, O.P., “Catholic Theology of the Trinity in the Nineteenth Century,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the Trinity*, 281–93.

Cyril O’Regan recalls as well the important nineteenth-century figures who reflected at length and widely on Hegel’s thought: “Ferdinand Christian Bauer (1772–1869), a Protestant, and Franz Anton Staudenmaier (1800–56), a Catholic . . . Bauer’s [final verdict] is overwhelmingly positive, and Staudenmaier’s negative.” “Aesthetic Idealism and Its Relation to Theological Formation,” in *The Impact of Idealism: The Legacy of Post-Kantian German Thought*, ed. Nicholas Boyle and Liz Disley, vol. 4, *Religion*, ed. Nicholas Adams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 158. Though Trinity is not a topic of direct focus in Thomas F. O’Meara’s two major studies on the impact of Romantic Idealism and Schelling in particular on Roman Catholic theologians, one would be remiss in not noting them since they provide a fine, contextualizing historical context for appreciation of the impact of Idealism on Catholic thought in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: *Romantic Idealism and Roman Catholicism: Schelling and the Theologians* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1982); *Church and Culture: German Catholic Theology, 1860–1914* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991).

## Chapter 3

1. In this presentation on Marheineke, I am following especially Samuel M. Powell, “The Doctrine of the Trinity in Nineteenth-Century German Protestant Theology: Philipp Marheineke, Isaak Dorner, Johann von Hofmann, and Alexander Schweizer,” PhD diss., Claremont Graduate School, 1987, 62–104, esp. 88–104; Samuel M. Powell, “Nineteenth-Century Protestant Doctrines of the Trinity,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the Trinity*, ed. Gilles Emery, O.P., and Matthew Levering (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 272–74. Martin Wendte says “Marheineke stands at the beginning of Hegel’s historical reception.” “The Impact of Idealism on Christology: From Hegel to Tillich,” in *The Impact of Idealism: The Legacy of Post-Kantian German Thought*, ed. Nicholas Boyle and Liz Disley, vol. 4, *Religion*, ed. Nicholas Adams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 27. For further biographical information, Wendte refers on 44n9 to Eva-Maria Rupprecht, *Kritikvergessene Spekulation: Das Religions- und Theologieverständnis der spekulativen Theologie Ph. K. Marheinekes* (Beiträge zur rationale Theologie, vol. 3) (Frankfurt a.M. and Berlin: Peter Lang, 1993), 12–34.

2. Philipp Marheineke, *Die Grundlehren der christlichen Dogmatik* (Berlin: Ferdinand Dümmler, 1819), accessed August 6, 2014, [http://books.google.com/books?id=hH4rAAAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=hH4rAAAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false).

3. Philipp Marheineke, *Die Grundlehren der christlichen Dogmatik als Wissenschaft* (Berlin: Duncker und Humboldt, 1827), accessed April 6, 2012, [http://books.google.com/books?id=BCpAAAAAcAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=BCpAAAAAcAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false), hereafter referred to as *Grundlehren* (1827).

4. “In view of its temporal priority, the question arises whether it was not the first of these works [*Die Grundlehren der christlichen Dogmatik*, 2019] that induced Hegel to adopt a trinitarian schema for the ‘Consummate Religion.’” Observation by Walter Jaeschke, *Reason in Religion: The Foundations of Hegel’s Philosophy of Religion* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 296n45.

5. “Mediating theologian” is a term being used here in a more general sense as compared with the more traditional sense in which it is applied to theologians like Isaak August Dorner, to whom we will refer below. See Powell, “The Doctrine of the Trinity,” 63, 65–66.

6. *Grundlehren* (1827), §§ 413–36, esp. §§ 413, 422–36. Given that the sections are relatively short and have surely been numbered by Marheineke himself, reference will generally be made to them directly in the text.

7. *Grundlehren* (1827), with part title on 253.

8. Powell, “The Doctrine of the Trinity,” 98–101.

9. As Powell judges, “I believe that the central direction of Marheineke’s thought indicates that at least he intended to be a Hegelian, whether or not he was a rigorous practitioner of the dialectic.” “The Doctrine of the Trinity,” 104.

10. See criticism of Marheineke’s trinitarian thought by Falk Wagner in his article, “Der Gedanke der Persönlichkeit Gottes bei Ph. Marheineke: Repristination eines vorkritischen Theismus,” *Neue Zeitschrift für Systematische Theologie* 10 (1968): 44–88. Powell describes Wagner’s criticism as “focusing on Marheineke’s failure fully to adopt the standpoint of the Hegelian system.” “The Doctrine of the Trinity,” 64–65.

11. Karl Barth, *Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century: Its Background and History* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1973), 491–98, esp. 497–98.

12. Powell, “Nineteenth-Century Protestant Doctrines of the Trinity,” 272, writes: “Marheineke’s main categories for understanding God are being, thought, identity, and difference.”

## Chapter 4

1. Isaak A. Dorner, *System der christlichen Glaubenslehre*, vol. 1, *Grundlegung oder Apologetik*, vol. 2, *Specielle Glaubenslehre* (Berlin: Wilhelm Hertz, 1879–81,

1st ed.; 1886, 2nd ed.), with the 1879 edition available online, accessed January 19, 2013, [http://books.google.com/books?id=1bkHAAAAQAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=1bkHAAAAQAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false); *A System of Christian Doctrine*, revised edition in 4 vols., trans. Alfred Cave and J. S. Banks (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1888–91, vol. 1: 1888). Reference will be to this revised, 1888 version of vol. 1 of the English text, translated by Alfred Cave, abbreviated *System*, 1 and cited by page number when referenced in footnotes. Usually this volume will be cited directly in the text only by page number. There will be occasional references in the text simply to numbered section. The 1880 printing of vol. 1, with the same pagination as the 1888 printing, is available online, accessed January 19, 2013, [http://books.google.com/books?id=zOZJAAAAAAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=zOZJAAAAAAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false).

In this presentation on Dorner, I am working especially with Samuel M. Powell, “The Doctrine of the Trinity in Nineteenth-Century German Protestant Theology: Philipp Marheineke, Isaak Dorner, Johann von Hofmann, and Alexander Schweizer,” PhD diss., Claremont Graduate School, 1987, 105–50, esp. 126–50; John W. Cooper, *Panentheism: The Other God of the Philosophers; From Plato to the Present* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006), 122–24; and Jonathan Norgate, *Isaak A. Dorner: The Triune God and the Gospel of Salvation* (London: T & T Clark, 2009), esp. 1–47, with a very helpful overview of *System*, 1 on 1–9; Samuel M. Powell, “Nineteenth-Century Protestant Doctrines of the Trinity,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the Trinity*, ed. Gilles Emery, O.P., and Matthew Levering (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 274–75. These studies provide further bibliographic references, and especially Norgate discusses important previous works on Dorner on Trinity. For a more critical consideration of Dorner on Trinity in the context of discussion with various trinitarian thinkers especially in the nineteenth century, see Christine Axt-Piscalar, *Der Grund des Glaubens: Eine theologiegeschichtliche Untersuchung zum Verhältnis von Trinität und Glaube in der Theologie Isaak August Dorners* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1990). In this study, her doctoral dissertation directed by Wolfhart Pannenberg, she focuses, on 178–94, more directly on Dorner’s constructive reflection on Trinity as found in *System*, 1, §§ 31, 31b, and 32.

2. Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1991), 295.

3. See Karl Barth, *Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century: Its Background and History* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1973), 577–78. See also Emanuel Hirsch, *Geschichte der neuern evangelischen Theologie* (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1951), 211, cited by Norgate, *Isaak A. Dorner*, 5n23.

4. In the Contents, the title reads “The Doctrine of the Holy Triunity, or of God, as the Essentially Triune,” *System*, 1:vii. The variation in the English translations of the titles reflects the German original.

5. In the Contents, the title reads “Positive Statement of the Doctrine of God as the Essentially Triune.” *System*, 1:viii. The variation in the English translations of the titles reflects the German original.

6. For his extended treatment of faith, see Dorner's long introduction in *System*, 1:33–168.

7. This affirmation of the closest relationship between Dorner's trinitarian thought and Dorner's further theological reflection is the thrust of Norgate's overall argument in *Isaak A. Dorner*, 5–6, 8.

8. See Isaak Dorner, "Dogmatic Discussion of the Doctrine of the Immutability of God" (1856), trans. Claude Welch, in *God and Incarnation in Mid-Nineteenth Century German Theology*, ed. Claude Welch (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 115–80, cited by Cooper, *Panentheism*, 122n5. On Dorner's view of ethical immutability as compared with ontological immutability, see Norgate, *Dorner*, 45–46, with relevant English-language bibliography in 45n184.

9. Cooper, *Panentheism*, 123.

10. In a rather telling phrase we can sense Dorner's rejection of Schelling's notion of potencies: "Because of the Christian consciousness (§ 31, 2), and in accordance with Scripture, it is requisite to know that these three modes of the divine Being do not become extinct in their product, the divine Personality, but that they eternally endure, in such a way indeed that God can reveal Himself in the world according to each of the three modes of Being, and that in each of them God knows Himself and wills Himself according to its distinction from the other modes, that in each of them He exists as a person and not merely as a power" (*System*, 1:448–49).

11. For Dorner's wonderfully clear and succinct presentation of Schelling's understanding of divine potencies in relation to Trinity, see *System*, 1:406–07.

12. Each thinker of course has his own particular understanding of these "moments."

13. Powell, "Mediating Theologians," 275.

14. Powell, "The Doctrine of the Trinity," 109, citing Robert F. Brown, "Schelling and Dorner on Divine Immutability," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 53 (1985): 237–49. However, perhaps Schelling's idea of freedom, at least in relation to Trinity, was less describable as one of a choice among alternatives than one might conclude. For a brief remark on the nature of freedom in Schelling, see Cooper, *Panentheism*, 119. Axt-Piscalar, *Grund des Glaubens*, 183–84n83, agrees with Brown that Dorner's notion of freedom is closer to that of Hegel since Dorner wishes to exclude freedom of choice. However, we should also note the Dorner wanted ultimately to avoid the type of logical necessity inevitably characteristic of Hegel's movement of thought.

15. Cooper, *Panentheism*, 123, citing Brown, "Schelling and Dorner," esp. 245–48.

16. See, for example, *System*, 1:464. In his article, "Schelling and Dorner on Divine Immutability," Brown presents a very careful and nuanced, succinct reading of Dorner in relation to Schelling and Hegel, with reference to his own further studies on Dorner. We should also note that there may well have been some further shifts in stress and phrasing in Schelling's thought even throughout his later years,

though Schelling claims and indeed seems to maintain a fundamental continuity in that thought throughout that period of time.

17. Isaak Dorner, “Über Schellings neues System, besonders seine Potenzenlehre” (1860), reprinted in Isaak Dorner, in *Gesammelte Schriften* (Berlin: Wilhelm Hertz, 1883), 378–431, accessed April 30, 2012, [http://books.google.com/books?id=H\\_FJAAAAAAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=H_FJAAAAAAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false); Isaak Dorner, “Schelling: Zur Erinnerung an seinen hundertjährigen Geburtstag,” *Jahrbücher für deutsche Theologie*, 20 (1875): 1–82, accessed November 3, 2013, <http://www.digizeitschriften.de/fileadmin/scripts/pdf.php?-UklQPTc0LjYwLjExNy43OCZQUE49dXJuOm5ibjpkZTpic3o6MjEtZHQNTExM19sb2cwMDAwNCZmZXM9JkFDTD1ZVG96T250cE9qQTdjem-80T2lKeVpXcHBaMmx2YmlJN2FUb3hPM002TkRvaVpuSmxaU0k3YVRveU8z-TTZNVeU2SW5WaWRIVmxZbWx1WjJWdUlqdDkmdGFyZ2V0RmlsZU5hb-WU9dXJuOm5ibjpkZTpic3o6MjEtZHQNTExM19sb2cwMDAwNC5wZGY=>. For a brief but helpful discussion of these two articles, see Xavier Tilliette, *Schelling: une philosophie en devenir*, vol. 1, *Le système vivant 1794–1821* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1970), 28–29.

## Chapter 5

1. Among the many helpful introductions to and presentations of the life and work of Solovyov see, for example, the following, each with further bibliography: Peter Peter Zouboff, introduction in Vladimir Solovyov, *Lectures on Godmanhood*, trans. Peter Peter Zouboff (San Rafael, CA: Dennis Dobson Limited, first edition 1948; Semantron, second, facsimile edition, 2007), 9–66; Vasily Vasilevich Zenkovsky, *A History of Russian Philosophy*, trans. George L. Kline, vol. 2 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1953; London: Routledge & Kegan Paul 1953), 469–531; Dimitri Strémooukoff, *Vladimir Soloviev and His Messianic Work*, ed. Phillip Guilbeau and Heather Elise MacGregor, trans. Elizabethe Meyendorff (Belmont, MA: Nordland, 1980), outstanding on life and influences: 23–74 with notes 339–49; George L. Kline, “Russian Religious Thought,” in *Nineteenth Century Religious Thought in the West*, ed. Ninian Smart and others (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), vol. 2, esp. 208–17, 223–25, 228–29, where on 229 Kline refers to Hans Urs von Balthasar’s presentation in *Herrlichkeit: Eine theologische Aesthetik* (Einsiedeln: Johannes Verlag, 1962), vol. 2, part 2, pp. 645–716/*The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics*, vol. 3, *Studies in Theological Style: Lay Styles* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986), 279–352, as “an appreciative and philosophically penetrating discussion”; a particularly readable and sympathetic presentation by Fredrick C. Copleston, “Chapter 9. Religion and Philosophy: Vladimir Solovyov,” in *Philosophy in Russia: From Herzen to Lenin and Berdyaev* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1986), 201–40; Maxime Herman, *Vie et œuvre de*

*Vladimir Soloviev: essai* (Friburg, Switzerland: Éditions Universitaires, 1995); Judith Deutsch Kornblatt and Richard F. Gustafson, introduction in *Russian Religious Thought*, ed. Judith Deutsch Kornblatt and Richard F. Gustafson (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1996), 3–30, esp. 9–13, and in the same volume “Solovyov: Background,” 27–30.

2. Zouboff, introduction in Solovyov, *Lectures on Godmanhood*, 15; Kline, “Russian Religious Thought,” 215; Copleston, *Philosophy in Russia*, 206–07, 209–10, 218, 239; Boris Jakim, editor’s introduction in Vladimir Solovyov, *Lectures on Divine Humanity*, ed. Boris Jakim (Hudson, NY: Lindisfarne, 1995), viii; David Bentley Hart, foreword to Vladimir Solovyov, *The Justification of the Good: An Essay on Moral Philosophy*, trans. Nathalie A. Duddington, ed. and annotated Boris Jakim (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2005), xxxvii–xxxviii.

3. Vladimir Sergeyevich Solovyov, *The Crisis of Western Philosophy: Against the Positivists*, trans. and ed. Boris Jakim (Hudson, NY: Lindisfarne Press, 1996). Hereafter referred to as *Crisis*.

4. Copleston, *Philosophy in Russia*, 212, where he says that Solovyov’s philosophy “can be outlined without reference to visions.” Kornblatt and Gustafson in turn write that “we can understand his [Solovyov’s] subsequent life’s work as an attempt to reconcile the mystical with the rational, the modern secular with the traditional and sacred.” “Solovyov. Background,” 27. It would seem both are right, each in his own way, Copleston referring to content and argument, Kornblatt and Gustafson to motivation and intent.

In 1898, two years before his death, Solovyov wrote a biographical poem entitled “Three Meetings,” in which he spoke at greater length of his three visions. A partial text is available in Jakim, editor’s introduction in *Lectures on Divine Humanity*, xiii–xiv, with a full translation by Ivan M. Granger, accessed January 27, 2013, <http://www.poetry-chaihana.com/S/SolovyovVlad/ThreeMeeting.htm>. A more recent translation is available in *The Religious Poetry of Vladimir Solovyov*, selected, edited, and introduced by Boris Jakim, trans. Boris Jakim and Laury Magnus (San Rafael, CA: Semantron, 2008), 99–107.

5. Copleston, *Philosophy in Russia*, 208.

6. Balthasar, *Glory of the Lord*, 3:295.

7. Balthasar, *Glory of the Lord*, 3:295, cites multiple sources for this information concerning Solovyov’s radical sense of practical Christian life. See also Zouboff, introduction in *Lectures on Godmanhood*, 14.

8. Copleston, *Philosophy in Russia*, 207.

9. On Solovyov’s varied understandings of *Sophia*, see: Zenkovsky, *Russian Philosophy*, 507–10; briefly in Copleston, *Philosophy in Russia*, 224–25; Jakim, editor’s introduction in *Religious Poetry of Vladimir Solovyov*, 3–7; Judith Deutsch Kornblatt, *Divine Sophia: The Wisdom Writings of Vladimir Solovyov* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009), a wide-ranging discussion of *Sophia* in relation to Solovyov’s life and writing on 3–97, and in presentations, throughout the book,

of various works by Solovyov with extensive bibliography on Solovyov in general and on his varied notion of *Sophia*, 273–87. Zenkovsky, however, considers *Sophia* only a secondary theme in Solovyov's thought, *Russian Philosophy*, 2:479–80. He will hold a similar reserve with regard to considering positive total-unity as a single central idea in Solovyov's thought. Zenkovsky seems to fear that citing such a unifying element will detract from a better recognition that Solovyov integrated insights from various sources and that his role was, more importantly, one of working out an organic synthesis of such insights (again, 2:479–80). Yet a few pages later he will write, "The idea of 'total-unity' gradually became the central idea and guiding principle of his philosophy" (482). But on 483n1 he notes: "In fact, this concept [positive total-unity] merely crowns his system, but is not central for him. The concept of Godmanhood, on the contrary, unites Solovyov's cosmology, anthropology, and historiosophy." Unfortunately, working with Zenkovsky in translation does not permit deciding whether total-unity and positive total-unity refer, in English, to the same Russian term and idea.

10. On the role of divine humanity or, as Zouboff translated the Russian term, Godmanhood, in Solovyov's philosophy, see Zouboff, introduction in *Lectures on Godmanhood*, 39–66. On difficulties in translating well the Russian word, see the brief discussion in Kornblatt, *Divine Sophia*, 9n12.

11. David Bakhurst, "Idealism in Russia," in *Cambridge History of Philosophy 1870–1945*, ed. Thomas Baldwin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 63. See also Balthasar, *Glory of the Lord*, 3:351.

12. Balthasar, *Glory of the Lord*, 3:281. See Aidan Nichols, *The Word Has Been Abroad: A Guide through Balthasar's Aesthetics* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1998), 114.

13. Balthasar, *Glory of the Lord*, 3:284.

14. Copleston, *Philosophy in Russia*, 207–08; Boris Jakim, "Editor's Introduction" in *Lectures on Divine Humanity*, vii.

15. Vladimir Sergeevich Solovyov, *Lectures on Divine Humanity*, translation revised and edited by Boris Jakim (Hudson, NY: Lindisfarne Press, 1995), referred to as *Lectures* and cited in notes by lecture in Roman numerals and by page in Arabic numerals but in the text simply by page number. It is quite difficult to condense further Solovyov's thought beyond his own concise presentations. In referring to the *Lectures*, I will paraphrase somewhat more closely, and quote somewhat more liberally from, Solovyov's text to allow for a better appreciation of, and Solovyov might say a better feeling for, the simple elegance of this text which is somewhat less known in Western circles. This paraphrasing and quoting will as well help us see better the ways in which Solovyov was influenced by German Idealism and in which he significantly adapted that thought to his own purposes.

For brief presentations of Solovyov's overall thought in the *Lectures*, see: Zouboff, introduction in *Lectures on Godmanhood*, 39–66; Jakim, editor's introduction in *Lectures on Divine Humanity*, ix–xv, where on xii he draws attention to the

summary in Maxime Herman, *Vladimir Soloviev: Sa vie et son œuvre* (Paris, n.p., 1947), 47–52. For dates when the various lectures were delivered, see Kornblatt, *Divine Sophia*, 274. In a longer study, it would be fascinating to read the *Lectures* in relation to Solovyov's French manuscript written over a couple years before he delivered the *Lectures* and unpublished in his own day, "*The Sophia*," which he described as "a kind of work of mystical-theosophical-philosophical-theurgic-political content in a dialogic form," quoted in Kornblatt, *Divine Sophia*, 109, where much of the text can be found on 115–63.

16. Michael Aksionov Meerson points out that Solovyov "presented his understanding of the trinitarian doctrine three times: in his unfinished work, *Philosophical Principles of Integral Knowledge* (1877); in his *Lectures on Divine Humanity* (1877–81) which contained the most detailed exposition of his trinitarian thought; and in his treatise, *Russia and the Universal Church* (1889)." *The Trinity of Love in Modern Russian Theology: The Love Paradigm and the Retrieval of Western Medieval Love Mysticism in Modern Russian Trinitarian Thought (from Solovyov to Bulgakov)* (Quincy, IL: Franciscan Press, 1998), 28.

17. This announcement appeared in the *Pravoslavnoye Obozrenie* (*Orthodox Review*) in 1878, cited by Jakim, editor's introduction in *Lectures on Divine Humanity*, ix.

18. *Lectures*, II, 13–15, with quote on 14.

19. See further succinct remarks on Hindu-Buddhist consciousness in *Lectures*, X, 147–48.

20. Solovyov seems here to be distinguishing between the confirmation of the existence of external entities by faith and the subsequent recognition of them as causes.

21. In passing, we might already here note a certain parallel between what Solovyov says concerning the relation of the untrue to the true and what Hegel says about the bad infinite and the true infinite.

22. Also *Lectures*, V, 57.

23. See further remarks on this world of ideas or the ideal world in *Lectures*, V, 62–63; X, 148–51.

24. Emphasis in this and other quotes from the translated text of the *Lectures* is found in the translated text.

25. Solovyov makes further remarks on Jewish monotheism and the personhood of God in *Lectures*, X, 151–53.

26. On Solovyov's presentation of Trinity, especially in the sixth lecture, see: Zenkovsky, *Russian Philosophy*, 497–502; Strémooukhoff, *Vladimir Soloviev and His Messianic Work*, especially 80–100; Copleston, *Philosophy in Russia*, 221–27; Balthasar, *Glory of the Lord*, 3:305–10, where he refers to one or the other later work in which Solovyov softens some of his positions taken in *Divine Humanity*, one example of which would be Solovyov's speaking earlier on more of a necessary linkage between eternal begetting and creation (306–07); David Brown, "Solovyov,



the Trinity and Christian Unity,” *Dialogue and Alliance* 4 (1990): 41–54; Meerson, *Trinity of Love*, 23–47, 211–16; Zouboff, introduction in *Lectures on Godmanhood*, in effect 39–66. These works often indicate further bibliography.

27. And Meerson remarks: “Thus, for Solovyov, the distinction between the three hypostases is logically contingent on the necessary threefold relation of the existent (*Sushchii*) to his substance. Solovyov defines the manners of this relation in the general logical form as being-inside-itself (*v-sebe-bytie*), being-for-itself (*dlia-sebia-bytie*) and being-at-home-with-itself (*u-sebia-bytie*). In the concreteness of revelation, these three manners of subsistence are called the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.” *Trinity of Love*, 32.

28. This reminds us, in its own way, of Hegel’s distinction between, generally stated, “understanding” (*Verstand*) which distinguishes and “reason” (*Vernunft*) which unites.

29. Perhaps here we can recall that Schelling’s first moment was in fact that of act of will, but in Schelling’s case more radically asserted than Solovyov does here.

30. Solovyov mediates this free acting on the part of particular human beings through what he calls the world soul, a rather complex notion whose presentation we cannot pursue further here.

31. For comparative remarks on the thought of Solovyov and that of Teilhard de Chardin, see, for example, Balthasar, *Glory of the Lord*, 3:290, 296. I have not been able to consult Karl Vladimir Truhlar, *Teilhard e Soloviev* (Rome: Edizioni Paoline, 1967).

32. Balthasar suggests that it may well have been Solovyov who applied “the three temptations of Jesus to the Church and to Catholicism in particular” before his close friend, Dostoyevsky, did. *Glory of the Lord*, 3:295.

33. In citing Vladimir Solovyov, *Sobranie Sochinenii* (*The Works*) (St. Petersburg, 1901–03, reprinted Bruxelles: Foyer Oriental Chrétien, 1966), 3:65, Meerson remarks that “Solovyov responded to Kant’s epistemological criticism with his religious-philosophical synthesis which he called a system of concrete (or real) idealism.” *Trinity of Love*, xv with 207n2 and see 27.

34. Balthasar, *Glory of the Lord*, 3:293. See further on Solovyov on the complex relationship between philosophy, on the one hand, and theology, religious consciousness, and faith, on the other hand, in Zenkovsky, *Russian Philosophy*, 2:487–93.

35. For example, *Lectures*, IX, 129–30 with V, 59–62, and X, 135.

36. Zenkovsky’s identification of influences on Solovyov’s thought or, perhaps in a sense better here, sources with which Solovyov worked, gains in importance because that identification is based on his extended work in the history of philosophy, his keen sense of affinity between what Solovyov writes and what various philosophers have said, statements made by those who knew Solovyov, and indeed on remarks made by Solovyov himself. N. O. Lossky also helpfully summarizes various influences on Solovyov: “The main influences under which Solovyov’s phi-

losophy took shape were the Christian Platonism of his master, Professor Yurkevich (of the University of Moscow), Schelling's doctrine of the relationship between the absolute and the world stated in his *Philosophy of Mythology and Revelation* as well as Schelling's natural-philosophical doctrine of the evaluation of nature toward the creation of an absolute organism." *History of Russian Philosophy* (New York: International Universities Press, 1951), 127, with discussion of Solovyov on 81–133.

37. Zenkovsky, *Russian Philosophy*, 2:469, 479.

38. Zenkovsky, *Russian Philosophy*, 2:485–86 on Russian thinkers.

39. Kornblatt, *Divine Sophia*, 12.

40. In a sense, however, Meerson reverses the comparison by speaking first of Trinity and then of creation as "the vestige of the Trinity." *Trinity of Love*, 22. See also, Judith Deutsch Kornblatt and Richard F. Gustafson, introduction in *Russian Religious Thought*, 11.

41. Zenkovsky, *Russian Philosophy*, 2:504.

42. Zenkovsky, *Russian Philosophy*, 2:473–74, with 484. It may be that Solovyov not only knew of Spinoza more directly but also took certain information concerning Spinoza's thought from Hegel's reassessment of Spinoza. See, for example, concerning *Omnis determination est negatio* (Every determination is a negation), Kornblatt, *Divine Sophia*, 126 with n. 29.

43. Zenkovsky, *Russian Philosophy*, 2:485.

44. Copleston, *Philosophy in Russia*, 207.

45. Zenkovsky, *Russian Philosophy*, 2:482–83.

46. Zenkovsky, *Russian Philosophy*, 2:525.

47. Zenkovsky, *Russian Philosophy*, 2:485.

48. Zenkovsky, *Russian Philosophy*, 2:497. Solovyov speaks more generally here of "logical order" and not of Hegel's specific understanding of logic as a movement of conceptual thought giving rise in Hegel's encyclopedic system to existent or realphilosophical realms of nature and spirit.

49. Zenkovsky, *Russian Philosophy*, 2:493.

50. Zenkovsky, *Russian Philosophy*, 2:285.

51. Zenkovsky, *Russian Philosophy*, 2:495–96.

52. Zenkovsky, *Russian Philosophy*, 2:489–90, 519.

53. Zenkovsky, *Russian Philosophy*, 2:521.

54. Zenkovsky, *Russian Philosophy*, 2:528.

55. Zenkovsky, *Russian Philosophy*, 2:505–06.

56. Zenkovsky, *Russian Philosophy*, 2:519.

57. Zenkovsky notes Solovyov's working with the subject as consciousness rather than as substance, but does not explicitly trace this back to an Idealist influence. *Russian Philosophy*, 2:512. To round out these remarks, especially regarding Schelling, we can cite a note jotted down by Solovyov around 1875 concerning his mystical side: "Kabbalah and Neoplatonism: Boehme and Swedenborg. Schelling and Me," cited by Kornblatt, *Divine Sophia*, 82.

58. Meerson, *Trinity of Love*, 24–25. Piama P. Gaidenko also stresses, in some detail, points at which Solovyov is influenced by Schelling. “Russian Philosophy in the Context of European Thinking: The Case of Vladimir Solovyov,” *Diogenes* 56 (2009): 24–36.

59. George L. Kline, “Hegel and Solovyov,” in *Hegel and the History of Philosophy*, ed. Joseph J. O’Malley, K. W. Algozin, and Frederick G. Weiss (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974), 159–70. For an appreciation of Kline’s great expertise in this and other areas, see Philip T. Grier, “In Memoriam: George Louis Kline, March 3, 1921–October 21, 2014,” *The Owl of Minerva* 46 (2014–15): 85–100.

60. Kline, “Hegel and Solovyov,” 159.

61. Kline, “Hegel and Solovyov,” 161.

62. Kline, “Hegel and Solovyov,” 162.

63. Kline, “Hegel and Solovyov,” 165.

64. See Kline, “Hegel and Solovyov,” 166, and “Russian Religious Thought,” 210.

65. Kline, “Hegel and Solovyov,” 166.

66. This formulation is a variant on what Kline says in “Hegel and Solovyov,” 166.

67. Kline, “Hegel and Solovyov,” 169–70. In a later study, Kline cites several Schellingian expressions borrowed by Solovyov: “The expression *teogonicheskii protsess* is one of many which Solovyov borrowed from Schelling (*theogonischer Prozess*). Others include *mifologicheskii protsess* (*mythologischer Prozess*), *umstvennoe sozertsanie* (*intellektuelle Anschauung*), and the key term *vseyedinstvo* (‘total-unity’ or ‘all-unity’) modelled on Schelling’s *All-Einheit* and *All-Einigkeit*. Schelling’s *mystischer Empirismus* is the model for Solovyov’s *mistitsizm*.” “Russian Religious Thought,” 223n14.

In his foreword to Solovyov, *Justification of the Good*, xxxvii, Hart speaks briefly of Solovyov’s philosophical journey and on p. xlii says “Solovyov is always engaged in a subtle struggle with the ghost of Hegel.”

For further remarks concerning Solovyov’s moves in his critical reworking of Hegel’s thought on the absolute, see Meerson, *Trinity of Love*, 25, 35. And Zouboff writes: “Solovyev was a most forthright pupil of Hegel; yet he somehow transcended his master’s dialectic and Protestant concept of the *Idée* as the ultimate being—transcended it, and filled it with the great riches of the Orthodox trinitarian God.” Introduction in *Lectures on Godmanhood*, 39.

Frederick Copleston, in turn, sees Schelling as appealing to Russian pan-Slavist groups and Hegel to “westernizers.” He writes regarding Solovyov: “It would certainly not be accurate to call Soloviev a disciple of Schelling. . . . He was in any case an original philosopher and not the ‘disciple’ of anyone. But in his tendency to theosophical speculation he showed a marked affinity of spirit with Schelling, and certain aspects of his profoundly religious thought are very similar to posi-

tions adopted by the German philosopher.” *History of Philosophy*, vol. 7, *Fichte to Nietzsche*, bound in three vols. 7 through 9 (New York: Doubleday, 1985), 147. In *Philosophy in Russia*, 237–38, Copleston gives some idea of the wide-ranging influences on Solovyov’s thought: “For example, [the influences] of Plato, Neoplatonism, Nicholas of Cusa, Jakob Boehme, Kant, Fichte, Schelling and Hegel, Franz Baader, Schopenhauer and Eduard von Hartmann, Ivan Kireevsky and Khomyakov, Indian thought, the Greek Fathers, theological and spiritual writers.” We should add Auguste Comte, as Copleston in effect does on 227, as well as a number of others.

In “Vladimir Solovyov (1853–1900),” *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, accessed March 3, 2013, <http://www.iep.utm.edu/solovyov/>, Thomas Nemeth brings up the question of various influences, perhaps one or the other being principal, on Solovyov: “Historically, another central concern among interpreters has been the extent of Solovyov’s indebtedness to various other figures. Whereas several have stressed the influence of, if not an outright borrowing from, the late Schelling [Mueller, Shein], at least one prominent scholar has sought to accentuate Solovyov’s independence and creativity [Losev]. Still others have argued for Solovyov’s indebtedness to Hegel [Navickas], Kant [Vvedenskij], Boehme [David], the Russian Slavophiles and the philosophically-minded theologians Jurkevich and Kudryavtsev.” Nemeth is referring, respectively, to: Ludolf Mueller, *Solovjev und der Protestantismus* (Freiburg: Herder, 1951); Louis J. Shein, “V. S. Solov’ev’s Epistemology: A Re-examination,” *Canadian Slavic Studies* 4/1 (1970): 1–16; Aleksej Losev, *Vladimir Solov’ev* (Moscow: Mysl’, 1983); Joseph L. Navickas, “Hegel and the Doctrine of Historicity of Vladimir Solovyov,” in Frederick J. Adelman, ed., *The Quest for the Absolute* (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1966), 135–54; Aleksandr I. Vvedenskij, “O misticizme i kriticizme v teorii poznaniia V. S. Solov’eva,” in *Filosofskie ocherki* (Prague: Plamja, 1924), 45–71; Zdenek V. David, “The Influence of Jacob Boehme on Russian Religious Thought,” *Slavic Review* 21/1 (1962): 43–64.

68. *Crisis*, 34–69.

69. See, for example, *Crisis*, 38–40, 48.

70. *Crisis*, 40–41.

71. On Solovyov’s reading of Hegel’s philosophy see, for example, *Crisis*, 44–58 and 104–17. He explicitly calls it one-sided on 50, 56. As Copleston remarks, “Solovyev, however, while admiring Hegel, regarded absolute idealism as a one-sided rationalist system.” *Philosophy in Russia*, 214. We might note that this was also Schelling’s criticism of Hegel.

72. For example, *Crisis*, 109. Again, Schelling’s criticism of Hegel.

73. *Crisis*, 92.

74. *Crisis*, 110. On 176n88, Solovyov further quotes E. von Hartman appreciatively in the latter’s affirmation that “this (real) principle posits that (*quod*) something is (*dass etwas ist*), whereas the ideal or logical principle determines what (*quid*)

it is (*was es ist*),” and notes that Hartmann took this from Schelling’s positive philosophy.

75. For examples of further direct references to Hegel and Schelling, from whom Solovyov says he learned a great deal, see Kornblatt, *Divine Sophia*, 128, 136, 167, 171, 228.

76. Note, for example, the brief remark, “Until the seventeenth century, then, except for some heterodox Jewish and Roman Catholic tendencies, Russian thinking tended to continue the ascetical, theological, and philosophical tradition of Byzantium, but with a Russian emphasis on the world’s unity, wholeness, and transfiguration,” in “Esalen Institute/Lindisfarne Press, Library of Russian Philosophy,” in Solovyov, *Lectures on Divine Humanity*, 187, no author indicated. And see: Nicolas Berdyaev, *The Origin of Russian Communism* (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor Paperbacks, 1960), 21, 23, 27–28; Kline, “Russian Religious Thought,” 180, 183, 199; Kenneth Michael Stokes, *Paradigm Lost: A Cultural and Systems Theoretical Critique of Political Economy* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, Inc., 1995), 141–42; Bakhurst, “Idealism in Russia,” 66: “Russian metaphysical idealism is important not because of its truth, but because of what it reveals about the characteristic quest of Russian thinkers (a quest found equally within the Russian Marxism that displaced idealism): the search for an all-embracing vision to facilitate the renewal, even deification of humanity through apocalyptic transformation, and a burning desire for all-encompassing unity, equality, and the transcendence of the commonplace.”

77. See, more generally, Copleston’s remarks in *Philosophy in Russia*, 222.

78. See, for example, Balthasar, *Glory of the Lord*, 3:282–83, 288.

79. Remarks taken from my study, *Experience and Spirit: A Post-Hegelian Philosophical Theology* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), 250.

80. Zenkovsky, *Russian Philosophy*, 2:469 with 479.

81. Zenkovsky, *Russian Philosophy*, 2:528–31.

82. Copleston, *History of Philosophy*, vol. 7, *Fichte to Nietzsche*, 147; Copleston, *Philosophy in Russia*, 207, where Copleston refers to the later Schelling as providing “stimulus for his [Solovyov’s] theological ideas”; Balthasar, *Glory of the Lord*, 3:281.

83. Richard F. Gustafson and others mention a number of these themes but do not link them to Idealism and its influence on Solovyov. “Soloviev’s Doctrine of Salvation,” in *Russian Religious Thought*, ed. Judith Deutsch Kornblatt and Richard F. Gustafson (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1996), 41.

84. Meerson phrases Solovyov’s working with Hegel and Schelling as follows: “Solovyov constructed his Trinitarian love paradigm within the framework of idealist philosophy.” *Trinity of Love*, 47.

85. Concerning Schelling’s influence, more generally considered, on Slavic and especially Russian thinking, see Xavier Tilliette’s brief but important review of several commentators on that influence, in *Schelling: Une philosophie en devenir*, vol. 2, *La dernière philosophie 1821–1854* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1970), 496–97n23.

## Introduction to Part 3

1. “Witness” was used in a more technical sense in the previous chapter to refer to those who gave explicit testimonial to Idealist influence especially through direct and often appreciative dialogue with Idealist philosophers. Here and later on the word will often serve in a wider sense to describe a more general relationship between their trinitarian thought and that of these Idealist philosophers.

2. For a philosophically astute understanding of family resemblances we might recall Ludwig Wittgenstein’s notion of *Familienähnlichkeit*. See Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1958, 2nd ed.) where, for example, at the end of § 66 and beginning of § 67, he writes: “And the result of this examination [of games] is: we see a complicated network of similarities overlapping and crisscrossing: sometimes overall similarities, sometimes similarities of detail. [§ 67] I can think of no better expression to characterize these similarities than family resemblances; for the various resemblances between members of a family: build, features, color of eyes, gait, temperament, etc. etc. overlap and crisscross in the same way.—And I shall say: ‘games’ form a family.” Accessed August 23, 2014, <http://gormendizer.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Ludwig.Wittgenstein.-.Philosophical.Investigations.pdf>.

## Chapter 6

1. Alan Torrance, “The Trinity,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Karl Barth*, ed. John Webster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 75.

2. Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, trans. from the sixth edition by Edwyn C. Hoskyns (London: Oxford University Press, 1933, reprint 1975).

3. See, however, Bruce L. McCormack, *Karl Barth’s Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology: Its Genesis and Development, 1909–1936* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), who proposes that after 1915 Barth was “a critically realistic dialectical theologian—and that is what he remained throughout his life” (vii).

4. Karl Barth, *Die kirchliche Dogmatik*, vol. 1, *Die Lehre vom Wort Gottes*, part 1, *Prolegomena zur kirchlichen Dogmatik* (Zollikon: Verlag der Evangelischen Buchhandlung, 1932), “Vorwort” on 6–12 (Auflage 1955), cited as *Die kirchliche Dogmatik*, 1/1/*Church Dogmatics*, vol. 1, *The Doctrine of the Word of God*, part 1, *Prolegomena to Church Dogmatics*, 2nd ed., trans. G. W. Bromiley, ed. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1975), preface on xi–xvii. With one or the other exception reference will be to the English translation of *Church Dogmatics*, 1/1 so referred to and cited in the text by page number.

5. There have been several recent review studies, in English, of Barth on Trinity. For a summary of Barth’s thought on Trinity, following the order in which Barth presents it in vol. 1, pt. 1 of the *Church Dogmatics*, see George Hunsinger,

“Karl Barth’s Doctrine of the Trinity, and Some Protestant Doctrines after Barth,” in *The Oxford Handbook of The Trinity*, ed. Gilles Emery, O.P., and Matthew Levering (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 294–313, esp. 294–309. For a presentation referring to a wider range of citations from the various volumes of the *Church Dogmatics*, see Peter Goodwin Heltzel and Christian T. Collins Winn, “Karl Barth, Reconciliation, and the Triune God,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Trinity*, ed. Peter C. Phan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 173–91; Scott R. Swain, *The God of the Gospel: Robert Jenson’s Trinitarian Theology* (Downer’s Grove, IL: IVP Academic, Intervarsity Press, 2013), 32–66, who reviews elements of Barth’s trinitarian thought in both vol. 1 and vols. 2 and 4, with a special focus on what he refers to as Barth’s “historicizing lead” and “Hegeling/historicizing Interpretation of God” (62). Again, R. D. Williams, “Barth on the Triune God,” in *Karl Barth: Studies of His Theological Method*, ed. Stephen W. Sykes (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 147–93; Torrance, “The Trinity,” 72–91; Samuel M. Powell, *The Trinity in German Thought* (Cambridge University Press, 2001), 183–93, 216–26, 243–48; Stanley J. Grenz, *Rediscovering the Triune God: The Trinity in Contemporary Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2004), 34–55; Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *The Trinity: Global Perspectives* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007), 67–75; *Trinitarian Theology after Barth*, ed. Myk Habets and Phillip Tolliday, (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co, 2011). For a favorable and quite developed consideration of Barth on Trinity, see Claude Welch, *In His Name* (New York: Scribner’s, 1952), 161–213. Bibliographies and references in these studies open on to what we quickly discover to be seemingly innumerable further studies on Barth on Trinity.

6. Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1991), 1:328.

7. Showing the importance of Barth’s later writing in his *Church Dogmatics* on Trinity for a fuller understanding and appreciation of his overall trinitarian thought is a major overall thrust of Heltzel and Winn in “Karl Barth, Reconciliation, and the Triune God,” 173–74.

8. Hunsinger, “Karl Barth’s Doctrine of the Trinity,” 294. We should, however, note Powell’s remark: “It is evident, then, that in addition to the view of God’s selfhood found in the first volume of *Church Dogmatics* there is another view in the fourth volume. According to the former, God is a simple personality, an individual subject of action. According to the latter, God exists as the in-between of the Father and the Son.” *Trinity in German Thought*, 224. For entry into the argument in favor of a “second” trinitarian theology in Barth, see Benjamin Myers, “Election, Trinity, and the History of Jesus: Reading Barth with Rowan Williams,” in *Trinitarian Theology after Barth*, ed. Myk Habets and Phillip Tolliday, (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co, 2011), 121–37. On the other hand, Bruce McCormack stresses continuity with further development in Barth’s trinitarian thought: “Still, the structure of Barth’s doctrine of the Trinity remains unchanged. It is still the case that what

we have before us is a single Subject in three modes of being. What has changed is simply the fact that we can now do a much better job of distinguishing these modes one from another.” “The Lord and Giver of Life: A ‘Barthian’ Defense of the *Filioque*,” in *Rethinking Trinitarian Theology: Disputed Questions and Contemporary Issues in Trinitarian Theology*, ed. Giulio Maspero and Robert J. Woźniak (London: T & T Clark International, 2012), see 244–48, with the quote on 247–48. Iain Taylor argues especially on the basis of ways in which Barth works with “person” and “mode of being” to a basic continuity in Barth’s trinitarian thought throughout the various volumes of *Church Dogmatics*. “In Defence of Karl Barth’s Doctrine of the Trinity,” *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 5 (2003): 33–46, esp. 41–45.

9. By way of example, see further references to later volumes in Powell, *Trinity in German Thought*, 221–26.

10. “While in their criticism of Barth they [Moltmann and Pannenberg] focus on volume I of the *Church Dogmatics*, their positive formulations of the doctrine [of the Trinity] are unthinkable apart from volume IV.” Powell, *Trinity in German Thought*, 222n152.

11. Since many of Barth’s basic trinitarian expressions are included in this succinct quote, it will be helpful to include the German original here: “Gottes Wort ist Gott selbst in seiner Offenbarung. Denn Gott offenbart sich als der Herr und das bedeutet nach der Schrift für den Begriff der Offenbarung, daß Gott selbst in unzerstörter Einheit, aber auch in unzerstörter Verschiedenheit der Offenbarer, die Offenbarung und das Offenbarsein ist.” *Die kirchliche Dogmatik*, I/1:311.

12. See Hunsinger, “Karl Barth’s Doctrine of the Trinity,” 297–99.

13. Hunsinger helpfully notes the potentially misleading translation of *Einheit* by unity, since Barth himself is concerned here with God’s oneness. “Karl Barth’s Doctrine of the Trinity,” 299.

14. “Karl Barth’s Doctrine of the Trinity,” 299.

15. Hunsinger, “Karl Barth’s Doctrine of the Trinity,” 299.

16. Hunsinger, “Karl Barth’s Doctrine of the Trinity,” 300.

17. In their editor’s preface in *Church Dogmatics*, I/1:viii, Bromiley and Torrance recall that Barth once agreed “way of being” might be a better translation of *Seinsweise* than “mode of being.” Though this would help avoid misunderstanding Barth as a modalist, according to the editors Barth’s various arguments in support of his understanding of *Seinsweise* led them, generally speaking, to retain the translation “mode of being.”

18. See Hunsinger, “Karl Barth’s Doctrine of the Trinity,” 301–02.

19. *Kerygma und Dogma* 23 (1977): 25–40. Jürgen Moltmann, in *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God: The Doctrine of God*, trans. Margaret Kohl (New York: Harper and Row, 1981), 241n22, draws attention to the similarity of Barth’s doctrine of the Trinity with Hegel’s, as indicated as well by L. Oeing-Hanhoff, “Hegels Trinitätslehre,” *Theologische Quartalschrift* 159 (1979): 287–303. I have not been able



to consult J. Hanvey, S.J., "Hegel, Rahner and Barth: A Study in the Possibility of a Trinitarian Theology," doctoral thesis, Oxford University, 1989/1990.

20. Pannenberg, "Subjektivität Gottes," 25. Concerning the importance of the "Hegelian category" of divine subjectivity for Barth's trinitarian doctrine in *Church Dogmatics*, 1/1, Myers refers to Michael Menke-Peitzmeyer, *Subjektivität und Selbstinterpretation des dreifaltigen Gottes: Eine Studie zur Genese und Explikation des Paradigmas "Selbstoffenbarung Gottes" in der Theologie Karl Barths* (Münster: Aschendorff, 2002). "Election, Trinity, and the History of Jesus," 125n20.

21. In his brief history of the notion of self-revelation, Pannenberg proposes that Barth may well have taken over from Marheineke the idea of linking God's self-revelation with its uniqueness. Wolfhart Pannenberg and others, *Revelation as History*, trans. David Granskou (London: The Macmillan Company, 1968), 3–6, and Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 1:223.

22. Pannenberg, "Subjektivität Gottes," 27.

23. Pannenberg, "Subjektivität Gottes," 28.

24. Pannenberg, "Subjektivität Gottes," 28.

25. Pannenberg, "Subjektivität Gottes," 29.

26. Pannenberg, "Subjektivität Gottes," 30, 36.

27. Pannenberg, "Subjektivität Gottes," 31. In noting this reflexive structure of subjectivity or here, in Barth, personality, Moltmann, *Trinity and the Kingdom*, 142 with 242n37, refers as far back as Fichte, who "talked about 'being,' about 'the existence of being' and about 'the bond of love' or of reflection, which permits the two to be one." Moltmann cites J. G. Fichte, *Die Anweisung zum seligen Leben oder auch Die Religionslehre* (1812) (Stuttgart: Freies Geistesleben, 1962), 10th lecture, 155ff.

28. Pannenberg, "Subjektivität Gottes," 30–31.

29. Powell, "Nineteenth-Century Protestant Doctrines of the Trinity," 279.

30. Eberhard Jüngel, *God's Being Is in Becoming: The Trinitarian Being of God in the Theology of Karl Barth*, rev. trans. John Webster (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001).

31. In addition, Torrance, "The Trinity," 89–90n7, cites R. D. Williams, "Barth on the Triune God," in *Karl Barth: Studies of His Theological Method*, ed. Stephen W. Sykes (Oxford: Clarendon, 1979), 188, as referring to a "similarity of pattern between Barth's concept of the Word and Hegel's pan-unity of 'Absolute Spirit, the one and universal self-thinking thought.'" Torrance also refers to strong parallelisms between Barth's actualism and Hegel's dynamic conception of "Being," spoken of by Horst George Pöhlmann in *Analogia entis oder Analogia fidei? Die Frage der Analogie bei Karl Barth* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1965), 117. See also Alan Torrance, *Persons in Communion: An Essay on Trinitarian Description and Human Participation* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996), 244ff.

32. Barth, *Protestant Theology*, 396.

33. Williams speaks, interestingly, of “Barth’s kinship with Hegel.” “Barth on the Triune God,” 188.

34. Barth, *Protestant Theology*, 421.

35. To follow up on further possible family resemblances between Barth’s trinitarian thought and that of Hegel and possibly Schelling, especially regarding their understandings of time and the history of God, one would need to review in greater detail what Barth has said in later volumes of the *Church Dogmatics*.

## Chapter 7

1. Among the many so esteeming Rahner and his influence, see John W. Cooper, *Panentheism: The Other God of the Philosophers; From Plato to the Present* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006), 224; more specifically regarding his influence on Catholic trinitarian theology, Peter C. Phan, “Mystery of Grace and Salvation: Karl Rahner’s Theology of the Trinity,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Trinity*, ed. Peter C. Phan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 192. Concerning Rahner’s more indirect influence in *Protestant Theology*, see Nicholas Adams, “Rahner’s Reception in Twentieth-century Protestant Theology,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Karl Rahner*, ed. Declan Marmion and Mary E. Hines (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 211–24.

2. On the impact of Idealism on Heidegger, with Idealism widely understood and including the modern Idealism of Kant, Schelling, and Hegel, see Daniel O. Dahlstrom, “Heidegger and the Impact of Idealism,” in *The Impact of Idealism: The Legacy of Post-Kantian German Thought*, ed. Nicholas Boyle and Liz Disley, vol. 1, *Philosophy and Natural Sciences*, ed. Karl Ameriks (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 225–45. Dahlstrom draws particular attention to Heidegger’s 1936–38 *Contributions to Philosophy*, in which Heidegger “reads the entire history of philosophy in terms of the impact of idealism” (230). See Martin Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 65, *Beiträge zur Philosophie (vom Ereignis)*, ed. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1989)/*Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)*, trans. Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999).

3. Later in life Rahner said, “I think that the spirituality of Ignatius himself which one learned through the practice of prayer and religious formation was more significant for me than all learned philosophy and theology inside and outside the order . . . I do think that in comparison with other philosophy and theology that influenced me, Ignatian spirituality was indeed more significant and important.” In *Karl Rahner in Dialogue: Conversations and Interviews, 1965–1982*, ed. Paul Imhof and Hubert Biallowons, trans. Harvey D. Egan (New York: Crossroad, 1986), 191. For a greatly nuanced but somewhat hesitant evaluation of the strength of the

relationship between Rahner and his thought, on the one hand, and Ignatius and his *Spiritual Exercises*, on the other, see Philip Endean, *Karl Rahner and Ignatian Spirituality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), esp. 239–46, with valuable, relevant bibliography 258–86. Prof. Philip Sheldrake kindly brought Endean's study to my attention.

For a helpful listing of "Significant Dates in the Life of Karl Rahner," see Imhof and Biallowons, eds., *Karl Rahner in Dialogue*, 362–65.

4. For Karl Rahner on the question of efficient causality and quasi-formal causality, see briefly *The Trinity*, trans. Joseph Donceel (London: Burns and Oates, 1970), 36, hereafter referred to as *Trinity*; "Trinity, Divine; Trinity in Theology," in *Sacramentum Mundi*, ed. Karl Rahner and others, vol. 6 (New York: Herder, 1970), 295–308, explicitly 298, 306–07; *Foundations of Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity*, trans. William V. Dych (New York: Crossroad, 1978), 120–22. At greater length on the scholastic concept of uncreated grace, see Karl Rahner, "Some Implications of the Scholastic Concept of Uncreated Grace," in *Theological Investigations*, vol. 1 (Baltimore, MD: Helicon Press, 1961), 319–46. In *Trinity*, 22n17, Rahner himself cites other writings by him on grace.

5. This and the following two paragraphs are a somewhat shorter paraphrase of remarks in my book, *Theology and the Experience of God* (New York: Peter Lang, 2001), 37–39. We can obtain a good sense of Rahner's interpretation of the notion "experience of God" from two of his texts: "The Experience of God Today," in *Theological Investigations*, vol. 11 (New York: Seabury, 1974), 149–65, esp. 152–60; and, *Foundations of Christian Faith*, 14–23, 26–39, 51–71, 131, but especially the marvelous and dense summary of his theory of revelation, 170–75.

On Rahner on the experience of God see, among many studies: J. Norman King, "The Experience of God in the Theology of Karl Rahner," *Thought* 53 (1978): 164–202; Edward L. Krasevac, "Revelation and Experience: An Analysis of the Theology of George Tyrrell, Karl Rahner, Edward Schillebeeckx, and Thomas Aquinas," PhD diss., Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA, 1986, 34–69, with bibliography of works by Rahner, 224–26; Annice Callahan, *Spiritual Guides for Today* (New York: Crossroad, 1992), 61–78. For an elegant discussion of Rahner on experience of God in the context of further reference to other writers, see Nicholas Lash, *Easter in Ordinary: Reflections on Human Experience and the Knowledge of God* (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1988; reprinted, Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990), 219–53, esp. 242–51. On Rahner on theology and experience in relation to his theological method and anthropology, see Anne Carr, "Theology and Experience in the Thought of Karl Rahner," *The Journal of Religion* 53 (1973): 359–76, esp. 371. For further primary and secondary bibliography, in addition to the standard Rahner bibliographies and the notes in the article by King, see Callahan, *Spiritual Guides*, 152–53n2. We should note that for Rahner grace, revelation, and experience of God are essentially co-extensive terms, although as theological concepts I would think the last of these should be seen as

undergirding the previous two in the sense of providing a point of departure for further reflection on the previous two.

6. On Rahner on the experience of God at this transcendental level, see his remarks in "Experience of God," 150–56, along with remarks in *Foundations of Christian Faith*, 171–73.

7. Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith*, 172–73. See Rahner, "Experience of God," 156.

8. Rahner, "Experience of God," 153 and 155 with 164–65.

9. Rahner, "Experience of God," 161–62.

10. This shift allows us to see, for example, the way in which Rahner handles the more Kantian concern to show how the social, institutional, and moral elements of a religious tradition can be considered important without seeing them as imposing illegitimate demands upon human autonomy. For a helpful critical reading of Rahner's emphasis on the transcendental, a critique elaborated in terms of the relationship between experience and language, see Derek Simon, "Rahner and Ricoeur on Religious Experience and Language," *Église et Théologie* 28 (1997): 77–99. For a defense of Rahner's understanding of the human experience of God as an understanding rooted in the experience of Jesus, see Mary V. Maher, "Rahner on the Human Experience of God: Idealist Tautology or Christian Theology?" *Philosophy and Theology* 7 (1992): 127–64.

11. Already now we can, with regard to Rahner's thought on the doubled trinitarian mediation, note for example Rahner's text, *Trinity*, 82–99.

12. Comparing his various more important presentations of his thought on Trinity, the experience of God, and his more general anthropology would surely make an interesting topic for further study.

13. Rahner's study on the Trinity: "Der dreifaltige Gott als transzendenter Urgrund der Heilsgeschichte," in *Mysterium Salutis: Grundriß heilsgeschichtlicher Dogmatik*, ed. Johannes Feiner and Mognus Löher, vol. 2, *Die Heilsgeschichte vor Christus* (Einsiedeln: Benziger, 1967), 317–401, with the third part on 369–97/*The Trinity*, trans. Joseph Donceel (London: Burns and Oates, 1970), with the third part on 80–120, with the English translation referred to as *Trinity* and usually cited in the text simply by page number.

Several helpful recent English-language presentations of Rahner on Trinity: Stanley J. Grenz, *Rediscovering the Triune God: The Trinity in Contemporary Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2004), 55–71; David Coffey, "Trinity," in *The Cambridge Companion to Karl Rahner*, ed. Declan Marmion and Mary E. Hines (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 98–111; on certain aspects of Rahner's thought, Cooper, *Panentheism*, 224–26; Käkkinen, *Trinity in Global Perspective*, 76–87. Vincent Holzer, "Karl Rahner, Hans Urs von Balthasar, and Twentieth-Century Catholic Currents on the Trinity," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Trinity*, ed. Gilles Emery, O.P., and Matthew Levering (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 318–23; Phan, "Mystery of Grace and Salvation," 192–207. An earlier

study: Thomas F. Torrance, "Toward an Ecumenical Consensus on the Trinity," *Theologische Zeitschrift* 6/31 (1975): 337–50. Also, Michael Schulz, *Sein und Trinität: Systematische Erörterungen zur Religionsphilosophie G. W. F. Hegels im ontologiegeschichtlichen Rückblick auf J. Duns Scotus und I. Kant und die Hegel-Rezeption in der Seinsauslegung und Trinitätslehre bei W. Pannenberg, E. Jüngel, K. Rahner und H. U. v. Balthasar* (Erzabtei St. Ottilien, Germany: EOS Verlag Abtei St. Ottilien Erza, 1997), on Rahner 581–685.

14. Rahner's two articles: "Trinity, Divine; Trinity in Theology," in *Sacramentum Mundi*, ed. Karl Rahner and others, vol. 6 (New York: Herder, 1970), 295–308, esp. 298–303, hereafter referred to as *Sacramentum Mundi*, 6.

15. Phan, "Mystery of Grace and Salvation," 197–201.

16. Italics in the translated text. Italics in quotes from Rahner are in the translated texts from which the quotations are taken.

17. Rahner's earlier study on God in the New Testament, in which he identifies God without further reference as the Father, certainly lies behind his more systematic formulation here. See Karl Rahner, "Theos in the New Testament," in *Theological Investigations*, vol. 1 (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1961), 79–148. See also his older study, "'Gott' als erste trinitarische Person im NT," *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 66 (1942): 71–88.

18. It would be good to recall that behind Rahner's various references to God as Father and the one who is the source of divine self-communication there lays his longer study, "Theos in the New Testament."

19. For example, *Trinity*, 105; *Sacramentum Mundi*, 6:301–02.

20. See Coffey, "Trinity," 103–04.

21. *Karl Rahner in Dialogue: Conversations and Interviews 1965–1982*, ed. Paul Imhof and Hubert Biallowons (New York: Crossroad, 1986), 18. Note also Rahner's remark in a lecture delivered in Chicago in 1966: "Anthropocentricity and theocentricity in theology are not contradictories but strictly one and the same thing seen from two different aspects, and each aspect is unintelligible without the other." Quoted by Johannes B. Metz, foreword to *Spirit in the World*, by Karl Rahner, trans. William Dych, S.J. (New York: Herder and Herder, 1968), xxx.

22. *Sacramentum Mundi*, 6:299.

23. *Sacramentum Mundi*, 6:300–01.

24. *Sacramentum Mundi*, 6:301.

25. *Sacramentum Mundi*, 6:302.

26. *Sacramentum Mundi*, 6:303.

27. Nicholas Adams speaks more generally of Rahner's working with a German understanding of ground as being mediated to Rahner from Schelling by contact with Heidegger. Adams writes, "The main point is that the 'ground' of thinking is itself unthinkable, yet must be presupposed if one acknowledges that thinking nonetheless happens." "Rahner's Reception in Protestant Theology," in *The*

*Cambridge Companion to Karl Rahner*, ed. Declan Marmion and Mary E. Hines (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 217.

28. See, for example, Winfried Corduan, "Elements of the Philosophy of G. W. F. Hegel in the Transcendental Method of Karl Rahner," PhD diss., Rice University, 1977; Winfried Corduan, "Hegelian Themes in Contemporary Theology," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 22 (1979): 351–61, esp. 357–58. I have so far not been able to consult the following two studies: H. Striewe, "*Reditio subjecti in seipsum*: Der Einfluss Hegels, Kants und Fichtes auf die Religionsphilosophie Karl Rahners," Doctoral diss., Faculty of Philosophy, Freiburg-im-Breisgau University, 1979; James W. Hanvey, "Hegel, Rahner and Karl Barth: A Study in the Possibilities of a Trinitarian Theology," DPhil thesis, University of Oxford, 1989. Milton Michael Kobus explores more especially the influence of Heidegger and Maréchal on Rahner's trinitarian thought, but without reference to Hegel, in "The Doctrine of the Trinity according to Karl Rahner," DTh diss., Graduate Theological Foundation, 2007. Anne Carr speaks of Hegelian ideas as only occasionally present in Rahner's thought, though she does point out several: "Chief among these are Hegel's use of the transcendental method to show the grounding of contingent experience in the absolute; his criticism of Kant in showing the ability of the human intellect not only to establish its own limits but simultaneously to transcend those limits in doing so; the dialectical unity of knowing and being; and the turn to history as the realm of the realization of transcendent spirit." *The Theological Method of Karl Rahner* (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1977), 11 with n. 1. In speaking more generally of Hegel's influence on contemporary theology and on Rahner, Stanley J. Grenz and Roger E. Olson have left us with the rather colorful remark: "The specter that haunts Rahner's theology begins to look more and more like the ghost of Hegel, whose panentheistic philosophy of the 'true infinite' that includes the finite in itself blurred the distinction between God and humanity. The house of contemporary theology has been haunted by Hegel's ghost ever since the great German philosopher lectured at Berlin, and Rahner's theology has not been completely exorcised of it." *20th Century Theology: God and the World in a Transitional Age* (IVP Academic, Intervarsity Press: Downers Grove, IL, 1991), 254.

29. Karl Rahner, "Aquinas: The Nature of Truth," *Continuum* 2 (1964) 62, cited by Corduan, "Elements of the Philosophy of G. W. F. Hegel," 122–23 with 144n8. As Corduan indicates on 144n2, "This is a translation by Andrew Tallon from the Portuguese. The German original is lost." For further reflection on this remark by Rahner, see Winfried Corduan, "Hegel in Rahner: A Study in Philosophical Hermeneutics," *The Harvard Theological Review* 71 (1978): 285–98. We should note as well that Rahner occasionally tried to distance himself from Hegel and his thought. It is interesting to see that Rahner attributes Prof. Honecker's rejection of his philosophical dissertation to the fact that "he felt that I had incorrectly interpreted the doctrine of Saint Thomas too much according to modern philosophy

(Heidegger's ideas in particular) and the fundamental tenets of German idealism." *Karl Rahner in Dialogue*, 12 and see 337.

30. On what follows, see Corduan, "Elements of the Philosophy of G. W. F. Hegel," 119–48; Corduan, "Hegelian Themes," 357–58. While Corduan speaks of "similarities," it will be good to recall that we are here working not just with similarities as such but in the context of our present discussion similarities that we are referring to as family resemblances between Hegel and Schelling, on the one hand, and Rahner in the present case, on the other hand—with the implication here that such similarities reflect a certain influence on the part of Hegel and Schelling.

31. On the relationship between being and knowing in Rahner, see the helpful presentation by George Vass, *A Theologian in Search of a Philosophy: Understanding Karl Rahner*, vol. 1 (Westminster, MD: Christian Classics, 1985), 35–37; and succinctly with explicit reference to the identity of pure being and pure knowing as what we call God, Louis Roberts, *The Achievement of Karl Rahner* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967), 48n19. Francis P. Fiorenza has early on noted this resemblance between Hegel and Rahner in their starting points, a resemblance evidenced already throughout Rahner's argument in *Spirit in the World*: "Hegel proposes . . . an absolute starting point which is immediate and indetermined and therefore does not contain an opposition between thinking and being. The philosopher then proceeds from his starting point *via negationis* to develop categories of thought. These observations of Hegel have strongly influenced Martin Heidegger and are also implicitly considered by Karl Rahner in his dialogue with Kant." Introduction in *Spirit in the World*, by Karl Rahner, trans. William Dych, S.J. (New York: Herder and Herder, 1968), xxx/German original, *Geist in Welt* (Munich: Kösel, 1957).

32. Karl Rahner, "The Theology of the Symbol," in *Theological Investigations*, vol. 4 (London: Darton, Longman & Todd), 236–37. See Corduan, "Elements of the Philosophy of G. W. F. Hegel," 191.

33. *Sacramentum Mundi*, 6:300–01.

34. Karl Rahner, "Jesus Christus, Systematik der kirchl. Christologie," in *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*, 2nd edition, vol. 5, ed. Josef Höfer and Karl Rahner (Freiburg: Herder, 1960), cols. 955–56. See Corduan, "Hegelian Themes," 357.

35. Karl Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith*, 219–23, where, in a section entitled "Can the Immutable 'Become' Something?" Rahner discusses this point in some detail. See also Rahner, "Jesus Christus, Systematik der kirchl. Christologie," cols. 957–58. Corduan, "Hegelian Themes" 357, cites this latter text of Rahner's, but indicates as reference p. 956 and refers to Hans Küng's analysis in *Menschwerdung Gottes* (Freiburg: Herder, 1970), 648–52. Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen's remarks in *The Trinity: Global Perspectives* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007), 79–80 are quite helpful. In regard to this question of an immutable God changing, he also refers on 79n20 to Karl Rahner, "On the Theology of the Incarnation," in *Theological Investigations*, vol. 4 (New York: Crossroad, 1982), 105–20.

36. It would be interesting to explore further in Rahner whether he sees any change in God at the Parousia, given this history of God rooted for Rahner in the Incarnation.

37. Regarding Rahner's pneumatology, Coffey writes: "In general it has to be admitted that Rahner's pneumatology was rather weak, even if it began to show signs of strengthening towards the end of his life. Inevitably, his trinitarian theology suffered as a result." "Trinity," 110. We might well wonder whether Rahner's need in his earlier theological context to focus on quasi-formal causality as compared with efficient causality might not have contributed to his apparently focusing less on final causality, stressed so much by Hegel and Schelling, with as result his then somewhat more understandably concentrating on God the Father and God the Son. In his discussion of Trinity Rahner does refer to the Spirit when he speaks of grace. However, in his other writings on grace he tends to refer more generally to God as such.

38. Vincent Holzer, "Karl Rahner, Hans Urs von Balthasar, and Twentieth-Century Catholic Currents on the Trinity," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Trinity*, ed. Gilles Emery, O.P., and Matthew Levering (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 323.

39. For example, for a careful consideration, from a theological perspective, of more positive as well as more problematic aspects of Rahner's trinitarian thought, see Walter Kasper, *The God of Jesus Christ* (New York: Crossroad, 1986), 301–03. Even after mentioning his reservations regarding Rahner's trinitarian thought, in the following pages (303–16) Kasper rather strikingly follows and incorporates a good number of Rahner's insights into his own further reflections.

40. *Sacramentum Mundi*, 6:303.

41. Adams, "Rahner's Reception in Protestant Theology," 219–20 and 222.

42. Karl Rahner, *Theological Investigations*, 23 vols. (New York: Crossroad, 1961–92). Carr suggests that Rahner's working with essays on individual topics may have given him greater freedom in his writing. *Theological Method*, 59n1.

43. For a particularly insightful review of this question of the identity of immanent and economic Trinity, see Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1991), 328–36. For a recent, negatively critical presentation of the core of Rahner's thought on Trinity, see Dennis W. Jowers, *The Trinitarian Axiom of Karl Rahner: The Economic Trinity Is the Immanent Trinity and Vice Versa* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2006), esp. 85–111. For a positive and creative interpretation of Rahner's assertion of this identity, see Eberhard Jüngel, "Das Verhältnis von 'ökonomischer' und 'immanenter' Trinität," *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 72 (1975): 353–64. For an appreciative reading but with an intention to go beyond Rahner's formulation, see the discussion in chapter 10 below on Catherine Mawry LaCugna's trinitarian thought.

44. Prof. Dr. Ekkehard Mühlenberg raised the question in 1977 in the course of a class session on Trinity.



45. See, for example, Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 1:307–08.

46. Adams, “Rahner’s Reception in Protestant Theology,” 219.

47. For an example of a critique of Rahner’s use of uncreated grace, see William J. Hill, “Uncreated Grace: A Critique of Karl Rahner,” *Thomist* 16/17 (1963): 333–56.

Coffey identifies several further possible weaknesses, as well as strengths, in Rahner’s trinitarian thought. Among the weaknesses, he refers especially to Rahner’s understandings of person and relation. “Trinity,” 108–10.

## Chapter 8

1. Wolfhart Pannenberg, “An Autobiographical Sketch,” in *The Theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg*, ed. Carl E. Braaten and Philip Clayton (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1988), 11–18.

2. Pannenberg, “An Autobiographical Sketch,” 12. In a sermon on Ex 3:1–12, entitled “Religious Experience—a Contemporary Possibility?” and preached in the Fall of 1975 at the School of Theology at Claremont, California, Pannenberg said a bit more about this experience: “Quite similar experiences [referring to that of Moses before the burning bush] can still happen today. To myself, at the age of sixteen, there occurred at a midwinter sunset early in 1945 what I never shall forget: There was not a dornbush, to be sure, but a flood of light suddenly all around me and penetrating my body in such a way that all gravity was forgotten. Nothing supernatural about that. Many people, in their years of adolescence at least, may have experiences like that. And yet it changed definitively my attitude toward reality for all my life, although at that time I did not yet know, as Moses did from his tradition, What God was speaking to me.” See also Wolfhart Pannenberg, “God’s Presence in History,” in *Theologians in Transition: The Christian Century “How My Mind Has Changed” Series*, ed. James M. Wall (New York: Crossroad, 1981), 93–99, where on 94 Pannenberg again describes his experience, this time noting that later he realized it occurred on the feast of the Epiphany. Stanley J. Grenz and Roger E. Olson affirm that “the theologian [Pannenberg] now sees in this experience Jesus Christ making claim to his life, even though he was not yet a Christian. Over the ensuing years this experience has become the basis for Pannenberg’s keen sense of calling.” *20<sup>th</sup> Century Theology: God & the World in a Transitional Age* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, InterVarsity Press, 1992), 186.

3. Pannenberg, “An Autobiographical Sketch,” 13.

4. Pannenberg, “An Autobiographical Sketch,” 13.

5. For further remarks on his open Lutheran stance, see Wolfhart Pannenberg, “A Response to My American Friends,” in *The Theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg*, ed. Carl E. Braaten and Philip Clayton (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1988), 315.

6. Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Systematische Theologie*, 3 vols. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1988), esp. 1:283–364 but also 365–483/*Systematic Theology*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, 3 vols. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1991), esp. 1:259–336 but also 337–448. Vol. 1 of the English translation will in this chapter be referenced in the text by page number and in the notes as *Systematic Theology*, 1. Pannenberg indicates several of his concerns in working out his own trinitarian theology, especially toward the end, in his article, “Die Subjektivität Gottes und die Trinitätslehre: Ein Beitrag zur Beziehung zwischen Karl Barth und der Philosophie Hegels.” *Kerygma und Dogma* 23 (1977): 25–40.

For more recent and quite comprehensive studies of Pannenberg on Trinity, see: Klaus Vechtel, *Trinität und Zukunft: Zum Verhältnis von Philosophie und Trinitätstheologie im Denken Wolfhart Pannenegs* (Frankfurt am Main: Josef Knecht, 2001), with wide-ranging discussion of Pannenberg’s working with various philosophical resources in the first part, “Philosophie und Offenbarung” (9–95), direct treatment of Pannenberg on Trinity in the second part, “Trinität und Zukunft” (97–184), and critical discussion with Pannenberg in the third part, “Punkte zum Gespräch mit W. Pannenberg” (185–267), with bibliographic coverage especially of primary and secondary works in German (276–88); Iain Taylor, *Pannenberg on the Triune God* (London: T & T Clark, 2007), who treats of Trinity throughout Pannenberg’s *Systematic Theology* and provides abundant bibliography referencing major German and English studies on 9–10 and an indication, on 2nn3 and 4 (and also p. 6), of additional studies by Pannenberg on Trinity beyond his *Systematic Theology*; Theodore James Whapham, *The Term “Person” in the Trinitarian Theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg*, *American University Studies*, series 7, *Theology and Religion*, vol. 321 (New York: Peter Lang, 2012), with very helpful bibliography. These three studies provide easily locatable presentations of and commentaries on various aspects of Pannenberg’s trinitarian thought.

See also: the earlier study, a more critical as well as Hegelian reading of Pannenberg on Trinity, by Roger E. Olson, “Trinity and Eschatology: The Historical Being of God in the Theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg,” PhD diss., Rice University, 1984, esp. 230–323; somewhat more broadly, Grenz and Olson, *20<sup>th</sup> Century Theology*, 186–99; a particularly lucid study: Christiaan Mostert, “From Eschatology to Trinity: Pannenberg’s Doctrine of God,” *Pacifica: Australasian Theological Studies* 10 (1997): 70–83, accessed September 16, 2012, <http://www.pacifica.org.au/volumes/volume10/issue01/>; Samuel M. Powell, *The Trinity in German Thought* (Cambridge University Press, 2001), 202–10, 233–39, 243–45, 253–58; Stanley J. Grenz, *Rediscovering the Triune God: The Trinity in Contemporary Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2004), 88–106; John W. Cooper, *Panentheism: The Other God of the Philosophers; From Plato to the Present* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006), 259–81, esp. 278–82; Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *The Trinity: Global Perspectives* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007), 123–50; Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, “The Trinitarian Doctrines of Jürgen Moltmann and Wolfhart

Pannenberg in the Context of Contemporary Discussion,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Trinity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 223–42, esp. 229–42; Gunther Wenz, *Introduction to Wolfhart Pannenberg’s Systematic Theology* (Bristol, CT: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013), 66–104, with abundant primary and secondary bibliography.

7. Taylor, *Pannenberg on the Triune God*, 3–5.

8. “We shall be expressing the subject matter of dogmatics in all its variety as the unfolding of the Christian idea of God,” Pannenberg wrote at the beginning of his three-volume study. *Systematic Theology*, 1:x.

9. Wolfhart Pannenberg, “God’s Presence in History,” *The Christian Century*, March 11, 1981, 263, cited by Taylor, *Pannenberg on the Triune God*, 1. While greatly appreciative of Pannenberg’s contributions to trinitarian theology and artfully presenting the trinitarian character of most of Pannenberg’s thought in the three volumes of *Systematic Theology*, Taylor indicates several areas in which he finds that character lacking. See especially his conclusion, 182–207. He criticizes, in particular, what he considers as the non-trinitarian character of Pannenberg’s epistemology: “The importance of the Trinity in how one comes to understand God’s revelation is at best very much in the background” (198).

10. *Systematic Theology*, 1, for example 259, with references to Matthew and Luke.

11. In disagreeing with Pannenberg on this objection that Thomas seemingly rooted Trinity in a notion of causality, Taylor proposes that Thomas’s use of the notion of cause “is a matter of controlled metaphorical usage and not, as it were, a straightforward extension of the language of causality as we employ it to speak of things and processes in the world.” This quotation by Taylor is from Nicholas Lash, *Easter in Ordinary: Reflections on Human Experience and the Knowledge of God* (London: SCM, 1988), 228. *Pannenberg on the Triune God*, 32, and 48–49.

Pannenberg’s hesitation concerning the role of causation, even when causation is more metaphorically considered, would seem to form part of his wider rejection of analogy rooted in causality. See Wolfhart Ulrich Pannenberg, “Analogie und Offenbarung: Eine kritische Untersuchung der Geschichte des Analogie Begriffs in der Gottes-erkenntnis,” Habilitation Writing, Theologische Fakultät der Rupprecht-Karls Universität zu Heidelberg, 1955, on Aquinas 105–31. For Pannenberg’s most important other writings on analogy, see Elizabeth Ann Johnson, “The Right Way to Speak about God? Pannenberg on Analogy,” *Theological Studies* 43 (1982): 673–74n4. See also Elizabeth Ann Johnson, “Analogy/Doxology and Their Connection with Christology in the Thought of Wolfhart Pannenberg,” PhD dissertation, The Catholic University of America, 1981; Vechtel, *Trinität und Zukunft*, 257n263.

12. We might already now mention that Pannenberg’s critique would seem to apply more appropriately to the trinitarian thought of Hegel and less that of Schelling.

13. The original remark is found at the beginning of the chapter, *Systematic Theology*, 1:259–60.

14. The English translation of *Ablesen*, the word Pannenberg uses to describe his move from identification of temporally enacted relationships to eternal ones, for example, in *Systematic Theology*, 1:312.

15. Taylor recounts Pannenberg himself's noting that John D. Zizioulas drew his attention to Athanasius's speaking of the Father not being the Father without the Son: "This enabled Pannenberg to achieve a new emphasis on the mutuality in the personal relations within the Trinity." *Pannenberg on the Triune God*, 7, where Taylor cites the fact that Pannenberg mentioned reciprocal triune relations already in *Metaphysics and the Idea of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990, published in German in 1988), 40–41. More recently Pannenberg has confirmed that "many years ago, when I was wrestling with this problem [mutually self-distinguishing of the divine Persons]," Zizioulas had pointed out to him Athanasius's insistence that the Father would not be Father without the Son. "Divine Economy and Eternal Trinity," in *The Theology of John Zizioulas: Personhood and the Church*, ed. Douglas H. Knight (Aldershot, Hampshire, England: Ashgate, 2007), 79–86 with reference to Zizioulas on 81. Pannenberg had been thinking about this idea of the mutual self-distinguishing of the three divine Persons for some time before he read the way in which Athanasius spoke of the relationship especially between Father and Son. In this essay Pannenberg succinctly recapitulates his argument in favor of mutually self-distinguishing divine Persons and responds to several critiques of this area of his thought.

16. Among the many further points Pannenberg makes concerning the role of the *Logos* and consequently of the Son is the idea that the "Logos is the generative principle of all the finite reality that involves the difference of one thing from another—a principle grounded in the self-distinction of the eternal Son from the Father." And the Son "is the creative origin of the particularity of each creature and at the same time the concrete epitome of its varied manifestations." *Systematic Theology*, vol. 2, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1994), quotes on 62 and 65. Taylor speaks of the *Logos* as "the eternal principle of difference and otherness," sounding an interestingly Hegelian ring in relation to what Pannenberg is saying. *Pannenberg on the Triune God*, 73.

17. Pannenberg cites Athanasius, *C. Arian*. 3.6, and see 1.29.34. He refers as well to Jean Zizioulas, "Vérité et communion," in *L'être ecclesial* (Paris: Labor et Fides, 1981), 73–74, where Zizioulas writes: "En ramenant l'être du Fils à la substance même de Dieu, Athanase transformait aussi la notion de substance elle-même. . . . Dire que le Fils appartient à la substance de Dieu implique que la substance possède presque par définition un caractère relationnel. 'Dieu a-t-il jamais existé sans ce qui Lui appartient?' [*Contra A.* 1, 20] . . . Si par nature l'être de Dieu est relationnel et si on peut l'indiquer par le mot 'substance,' ne doit-on pas

en conclure alors presque inévitablement que, étant donné le caractère dernier de l'être de Dieu pour toute ontologie, la substance, en tant qu'elle indique le caractère dernier de l'être, ne peut être conçue que comme communion?" (73, with references to and quotations from Athanasius on 73–74n59). The French text was first published as "Vérité et communion dans la perspective de la pensée grecque" in *Irénikon* 50 (1977): 451–510, from which the English translation reads: "By connecting the Son's being with the very substance of God, Athanasius also transformed the idea of substance. . . . To say that the Son belongs to God's substance implies that substance *possesses almost by definition a relational character*. [quoting Athanasius:] 'Has God ever existed without his own (Son)?' . . . If God's being is by nature relational, and if it can be signified by the word 'substance,' can we not then conclude almost inevitably that, given the ultimate character of God's being for all ontology, substance, inasmuch as it signifies the ultimate character of being, can be conceived only as communion?" "Truth and Communion" in *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1985, 1993), 84, with references to and quotations from Athanasius on 84–85n60. Here Zizioulas is thinking more in terms of the notion of person, as relational, as being implied in the trinitarian thought of the Cappadocians.

18. "Panentheistic" is the rubric under which Cooper treats of Pannenberg's thought, in *Panentheism*, 259–81. On Pannenberg's rejection of panentheism as a word characterized by "vagueness and misleading implications," see 259–60. It should be noted that Cooper himself does not agree with using the notion of panentheism to describe the relation between God and world (319–46).

19. The English text of Pannenberg's *Systematic Theology*, 1:336, refers to the previous note 50, but should surely indicate, rather, note 68 on p. 279. It would seem that there is a certain consensus that this letter 38 attributed to Basil is the work of his brother, Gregory of Nyssa, as noted by Whapham, "Person" in *the Trinitarian Theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg*, 39n27. Whapham refers to Sarah Coakley's "Persons' in the Social Doctrine of the Trinity: Current Analytic Discussion and 'Cappadocian' Theology," in *Powers and Submissions: Spirituality, Philosophy and Gender* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 109–29, see esp. 116–24 and therein 119–20. See the basic study by Reinhard Hübner, "Gregor von Nyssa als Verfasser der sog. Ep. 38 des Basilius: Zum unterschiedlichen Verständnis der *ousia* bei den kappodozischen Brüdern," in *Epektasis: Mélanges patristiques offerte au Cardinal Jean Daniélou*, ed. Jacques Fontaine and Charles Kannengiesser (Paris: Beauchesne, 1972), 463–90. More important perhaps than authorship is the fact that the letter itself would seem to present an interpretation of Aristotelian concrete essence being realized in three instantiations in a more sophisticated way than simply that of specimens of a common genus. This more nuanced reading might well support, to some extent at least, Pannenberg's own position concerning the concrete reality of the three divine hypostases, to use here the term found in the

letter. See further very briefly in my study, *Experience and Spirit: A Post-Hegelian Philosophical Theology* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), 48.

20. Whapham, “Person” in the *Trinitarian Theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg*, 156–57 with n. 37 identifies two ways, namely, field theory and the self-giving nature of love, in which Pannenberg responds to the question as to how the three divine Persons can be “absolutely and perfectly united in the one divine essence.” In this n. 37 he quotes Pannenberg on love, in which quote Pannenberg himself refers to the infinite. Whapham renders a rather severe judgment on Pannenberg’s efforts to establish divine unity on the basis of a move from three divine Persons to one God: “In the end, both of Pannenberg’s arguments [field theory and nature of love] for the unity of the divine persons suffer from an imprecision which is unfitting for such a crucial element of the Christian notion of God,” 157, and see 156–58.

21. Cooper provides multiple references to various places in Pannenberg’s *Systematic Theology* where Pannenberg refers to or discusses the notion of field as well as to several secondary sources in which the notion is discussed. *Panentheism*, 266–78.

22. Regim Prenter, “Der Gott, der Liebe ist: Das Verhältnis der Gotteslehre zur Christologie,” *Theologische Literaturzeitung* 96 (1971): 403, with reference to this study on 424n182.

23. Pannenberg ends his three-volume *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1997), 3:646, in a similar but more explicit vein: “On the whole path from the beginning of creation by way of reconciliation to the eschatological future of salvation, the march of the divine economy of salvation is an expression of the incursion of the eternal future of God to the salvation of creatures and thus a manifestation of the divine love. Here is the eternal basis of God’s coming forth from the immanence of the divine life as the economic Trinity and of the incorporation of creatures, mediated thereby, into the unity of the trinitarian life. The distinction and unity of the immanent and economic Trinity constitute the heartbeat of the divine love, and with a single such heartbeat this love encompasses the whole world of creatures.” Pannenberg has in effect found a way to affirm not only real relations among the three divine Persons but also, on the basis of a free divine decision to create, real relations with created reality. See briefly in Whadham, “Person” in the *Trinitarian Theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg*, 134, in the context of his summary presentation of the notion of “divine person” in Pannenberg’s trinitarian thought, and see also 152.

24. For a brief but insightful negative critique of what is often understood as Pannenberg’s transformational reading of Hegel’s focus on the inclusive end-moment, see Nicholas Adams, “Eschatology Sacred and Profane: The Efforts of Philosophy on Theology in Pannenberg, Rahner and Moltmann,” *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 2 (2000): 283–306, with treatment of Hegel and Pannenberg on 286–92. In a memorable phrase, Adams writes: “For Hegel, eschatology is put in its place

in the system. For Pannenberg, the system is put in its place by eschatology,” 291. For a more sweeping negative critique of Pannenberg’s “Hegelian Trinitarianism,” see Anselm K. Min, “The Dialectic of Divine Love: Pannenberg’s Hegelian Trinitarianism,” *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 6 (2004): 252–69.

25. Kärkkäinen provides a handy, compact list of themes Pannenberg (and Moltmann) have, to a large extent, developed following upon the thought especially of Barth and Rahner. It is easy to recognize the relationship of these themes to Idealist trinitarian thought. “The Trinitarian Doctrines,” 223. Kärkkäinen here notes that Pannenberg (and Moltmann) “both echo and have shaped nearly all the key themes of the doctrine of the Trinity in contemporary theology.”

26. Taylor, *Pannenberg on the Triune God*, for example 14–21.

27. Taylor, *Pannenberg on the Triune God*, 17–19. Taylor refers to *Jesus—God and Man* (London: SCM, 1968), 197.

28. For a listing of further studies on the relationship between Pannenberg and Hegel, see Taylor, *Pannenberg on the Triune God*, 19–20n65.

29. Kärkkäinen, *Trinity: Global Perspectives*, 146–47.

30. The first part of *Trinität und Zukunft* is on 5–6, 9–95, and the presentation of Pannenberg’s critique of Hegel especially on 14–22.

31. Vechtel, *Trinität und Zukunft*, 6, 97–184.

32. One of the few who do allude to Schelling’s overall influence on Pannenberg is Sisto J. Garcia, “Seminar on Trinitarian Theology,” in *Catholic Theological Society of America: Proceedings* 48 (1993): 141, accessed April 25, 2013, <http://ejournals.bc.edu/ojs/index.php/ctsa/article/view/3859/3426>.

33. Vechtel, *Trinität und Zukunft*, 97.

34. Vechtel, *Trinität und Zukunft*, 129, and see later 191–94 and 271. In the third part of *Trinität und Zukunft*, “Punkte zum Gespräch mit W. Pannenberg,” 6–7, 185–267, Vechtel examines various aspects of what he indicates as problematic points in Pannenberg’s trinitarian thought and Pannenberg’s understanding of the ways in which analogical divine predication works. In this third part, to put it somewhat crudely, as Vechtel had seen Pannenberg distance himself from Hegel’s notion of the need for God to create a world in order to come to inclusive divine fullness so now Vechtel, with some continuing critical reference to Hegel, proposes several modifications to Pannenberg’s thought on Trinity. He does this essentially by arguing to various ways in which Pannenberg’s trinitarian thought can be modified by working with other notions than the idea of God as the power of the future.

Vechtel (287) lists two further studies of Pannenberg in relation to Hegel: Michael Schulz, “Zur Hegelkritik Wolfhart Pannenger und zur Kritik am ‘Antizipationsgedanken’ Pannenger im Sinne Hegels,” *Münchener Theologische Zeitschrift* 43 (1992): 197–227, a study however which focuses less on Trinity and more on the question of Pannenberg’s reworking of Hegel’s “realized eschatology” in a form of eschatology involving “anticipation”; *Sein und Trinität: Systematische Erörterungen zur Religionsphilosophie G. W. F. Hegels im ontologiegeschichtlichen*

*Rückblick auf J. Duns Scotus und I. Kant und die Hegel-Rezeption in der Seinsauslegung und Trinitätslehre bei W. Pannenberg, E. Jüngel, K. Rahner und H.U. v. Balthasar* (Erzabtei St. Ottilien, Germany: EOS Verlag Abtei St. Ottilien Erza, 1997), where Schulz after extensive treatment of Hegel on Trinity, 128–422, takes up the question of Pannenberg, in relation to Hegel, on Trinity, 423–505.

35. In *Systematic Theology*, 1:223, Pannenberg refers to Hegel and to the earlier Schelling in the course of his history of the notion of divine revelation but no longer to the later Schelling, as he had done in *Revelation as History*. And he continues to refer to Hegel over the course of his presentation on the history of the notion of the Trinity in his *Systematic Theology* but does not there refer explicitly to Schelling. Nor does he seem to refer explicitly to Schelling in developing his own theology of the Trinity other than to make a brief reference to the later Schelling in relation to Tillich in *Systematic Theology*, 1:356. But farther on in his *Systematic Theology* Pannenberg makes reference to Schelling's 1845 lectures on the "Philosophy of Revelation." *Systematic Theology*, 3:602.

Whapham, however, sees in the overall relationships among Father, Son, and Spirit a general Hegelian similarity in that for Pannenberg "the Father is best understood as the moment of original divine unity and completion . . . the Son is best seen as the divine principle of distinction and difference . . . The resulting tension and distinction within the intratrinitarian life of God can only be resolved by a third principle, which is the reconciling and consummating Spirit of God that resolves the divisions among the divine persons in a new unity." *"Person" in the Trinitarian Theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg*, 23.

36. See again, for example, *Systematic Theology*, 1:307, 318–21.

37. And here and there throughout the three volumes of *Systematic Theology*.

38. It might be helpful to repeat, by way of example, an extract from our previous summary of some of what Schelling had said in his 24th lecture concerning Father and Son: "Schelling says that the Father is indeed free only in the Son for it is in willing the Son that the Father intends through the Son to will, in creation, that which is external to the Father. The Father loves the Son as the possibility of this creation. So, the glory of the Father, which is his freedom, is also the glory of the Son who will freely bring into being a world of which the Father will ultimately be Lord."

39. See again Pannenberg's particularly inspiring reference to "person" in *Systematic Theology*, 1:422–32, and especially 425–32, under the subtitle and rubric, "The Love of God."

40. In an interesting, brief discussion of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century "turn" to the notion of a social Trinity, Grenz refers to "proponents of the turn-of-the-century reformulation of the social Trinity . . . who accepted Hegel's focus on subjectivity, but applied the descriptor to the three trinitarian persons rather than to the one divine Subject, as Hegel had done." He sees these Trinitarians as "anticipating the work of Moltmann, Pannenberg, and Jensen." *Rediscovering the*



*Triune God*, 132–33. And Grenz makes explicit reference to early twentieth-century British trinitarian thinkers when he speaks of an application of Hegel's notion of person to each of the three divine Persons. *The Social God and the Relational Self: A Trinitarian Theology of the Imago Dei* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 31–32, with special reference, regarding this development, to Claude Welch, *In His Name: The Doctrine of the Trinity in Contemporary Theology* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952), 29–34.

41. Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Jesus—God and Man* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1968), 181–82.

42. Pannenberg, *Jesus—God and Man*, 182–83.

43. Olson had earlier on raised a question regarding Pannenberg's understanding of Hegel's view of person, at least as presented in the context of Hegel's presentation of Trinity. "Trinity and Eschatology," 168–71, 282.

For further remarks on Pannenberg's reception of Hegel's "personalistic model of Trinity," to use Vechtel's phrase, see Vechtel, *Trinität und Zukunft*, 104–9. Vechtel also sees a similarity between Hegel's and Pannenberg's ideas that the second moment or Person in the Trinity is the principle of otherness (123), a position reminiscent as well of Schelling's idea of the second potency as potential for realization of diversity.

44. Hegel as well speaks of freedom as free self-release of the absolute idea in logic into the realm or sphere of nature. However, this self-release takes place, from the perspective of Hegel's encyclopedic system as a whole, on the basis of a lack of concrete being on the part of the absolute idea in logic in relation to the realphilosophical spheres of nature and spirit.

45. See again, for example, *Systematic Theology*, 1:382–84.

46. Pannenberg, "A Response to My American Friends," 327.

47. See, among many references concerning Pannenberg on God as love, Spirit, and the Infinite, *Systematic Theology*, 1:396. In *Systematic Theology*, 1:446, he speaks of Hegel's inability to resolve the problem as to how to "combine the unity of the infinite and the finite in a single thought without expunging the difference between them and argues that this can only be accomplished in the thought of divine love. Robert Jenson draws attention to Pannenberg's point: "Only love, he [Pannenberg] says, fulfills Hegel's posit of a 'true infinite.'" *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1, *The Triune God* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 220n64.

Kärkkäinen, *Trinity: Global Perspectives*, reminds us of the multiple background to Pannenberg's notion of God as the infinite. He cites, for example, Gregory of Nyssa, Duns Scotus, and Descartes (131) and of course Hegel (146–47). Vechtel, *Trinität und Zukunft*, 25, remarks that Pannenberg, like Hegel, thought the world could not be fully understood without the idea of God. Again, Vechtel points out Pannenberg agrees with Hegel that the truth is the whole with, however, for Pannenberg the whole being established only at the end of the historical process (33). Vechtel then speaks further of Pannenberg's reception of Hegel's idea of the true infinite (for example, 46–49, 54, 75). For Pannenberg's own appreciative pre-

sensation of Hegel on the true infinite and even spirited defense of Hegel in this regard, see, for example, Wolfhart Pannenberg, "Father, Son, Spirit: Problems of a Trinitarian Doctrine of God," *Dialog* 26 (1987): 256–57. In this article Pannenberg acknowledges the importance of Hegel and Schelling in the history of Trinity (250). He continues to refer to Hegel in the article but not to Schelling.

48. As Vechtel, *Trinität und Zukunft*, 85–86, notes, Pannenberg recalls that divine self-revelation understood, to quote Pannenberg, "im Sinne der strengen Identität von Subjekt und Inhalt des Offenbarens gedacht," first came to the fore with German Idealism and especially Hegel. Vechtel cites Pannenberg, *Systematische Theologie*, 1:244, and refers overall to 234–44. The full sentence in English reads: "Only in the philosophy of German Idealism do we first find the thought of the self-revelation of God in the sense of the strict identity of subject and content." *Systematic Theology*, 1:222–23. See also Pannenberg, *Revelation as History*, 4–5.

49. Wenz, *Wolfhart Pannenberg's Systematic Theology*, 83.

50. English translation 1968, pp. 16–17 (German edition published in 1961).

51. The text of this important study is available in Ludger Oeing-Hanhoff, "Hegel's Trinitätslehre: Zur Aufgabe ihrer Kritik und Rezeption," in *Metaphysik und Freiheit: Ausgewählte Abhandlungen*, ed. Theo Kobusch and Walter Jaeschke (Munich: Erich Wewel, 1988), 91–120, with reference to Pannenberg's invitation on 115.

52. In Wolfhart Pannenberg, *The Idea of God and Human Freedom* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1973), 144–77.

53. Wolfhart Pannenberg, "La Doctrina de la Trinidad en Hegel y su recepción en la teología alemana," *Estudios trinitarios* 30 (1996): 35–51.

54. Pannenberg, "La doctrina de la Trinidad," 35–41 for the overview of Hegel on Trinity and 41–51 for the more historical review.

55. Robert Jenson, "Parting Ways?" *First Things*, Issue Archives, May 1995, accessed July 17, 2012, <http://www.firstthings.com/article/2008/09/001-parting-ways-22>.

56. "Some Facts about Pannenberg," Corduan's blog online May 13, 2009, accessed July 17, 2012, [http://win\\_corduan.tripod.com/theologians.html/#pannenberg](http://win_corduan.tripod.com/theologians.html/#pannenberg). Philip Clayton also recounts a meeting with Pannenberg in which he spoke of Hegelian influence on Pannenberg's thought, much to Clayton's regret. "Anticipation and Theological Method," in *The Theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1988), 132–34. Here Clayton provides further helpful remarks concerning Pannenberg's philosophical allegiances and refers to Pannenberg's own brief review of modern philosophers, "Faith and Reason," in *Basic Questions in Theology*, vol. 2, trans. George H. Kehm (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), 59–62, where Pannenberg refers to Kant, Fichte, and Hegel, among others, but not to Schelling.

57. Pannenberg, "An Autobiographical Sketch," 16. In a similar vein: "I am not a Hegelian. I just happen to think that Hegel was one of the outstanding

minds in the history of modern thought, one whose work sets a high standard for us to follow. That is why I believe that theology after Hegel should strive to rise to his level of sophistication and rigor. But very few of my ideas did I actually get from Hegel—very few. I feel much more closely related and indebted to thinkers other than Hegel. His ideas, for example, are not as good as those of Wilhelm Dilthey, to whose assumptions in the area of hermeneutics I am indebted.” In M. Baumann, *Roundtable: Conversations with European Theologians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1990), 48, quoted by Wenz, *Wolfhart Pannenberg’s Systematic Theology*, 247n9.

58. We may gain further insight into Pannenberg’s hesitation about being linked too closely with the Idealist tradition from his following remark: “I am not sure whether every claim to truth in the sense of correspondence of thought to reality must be ‘idealistic.’ If so, everyone who does not surrender the notion of truth has to be called an idealist, and in that case I shall not be ashamed to be counted among that company. But normally, the notion of idealism is used in a somewhat narrower sense. I certainly do not want to equate thought and being in general.” “A Response to My American Friends,” 321. And in an early remark, “We should also remember that to locate a theological thought in German idealism is not automatically to condemn it.” Wolfhart Pannenberg, introduction in *Revelation as History*, ed. Wolfhart Pannenberg and others, trans. David Granskou (London: The Macmillan Company, 1968), 5.

Wenz, *Wolfhart Pannenberg’s Systematic Theology*, 234–47, provides initial access to some of Pannenberg’s longer reflections on theology and philosophy in two studies by Pannenberg. The first of these is *Theologie und Philosophie: Ihr Verhältnis im Lichte ihrer gemeinsamen Geschichte* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), on German Idealism esp. 216–93. Pannenberg discusses Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel in relation to “early Idealism,” but then dedicates the whole of chapter 10, 257–93, to Hegel’s systematic thought. There, at the end, 285–93, he indicates Hegel’s continuing relevance (*bleibende Bedeutung*) as well as limits to Hegel’s thought. Among aspects of or elements in that thought which he appreciates as being of continuing importance, we could note Hegel’s overall contribution in opening to theology new ways of thought (285), his discovery in Hegel of the concept as anticipation (286), and his appreciation of Hegel’s notion of the true infinite although he criticizes the specific way in which Hegel linked his notion of the true infinite with the notion of Trinity (288). The second Pannenberg study Wenz notes is *Problemgeschichte der neueren evangelischen Theologie in Deutschland: Von Schleiermacher bis zu Barth und Tillich* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1997), on Schelling and Schleiermacher 62 to approximately 65, on Hegel on God, with occasional reference to Schelling, 276–89. Pannenberg underscores Hegel’s preeminent influence in theology, along with that of the later Schelling: “Von den bedeutenden Philosophen des deutschen Idealismus hat Hegel,—when man von der Spätphilosophie des alten Schellings absieht, . . . sich am entscheidensten dem

Christentum zugewandt und bewußt und erklärtermaßen seine Philosophie auf dem Boden der christlichen Religion entwickelt" (276).

In a more specific but related point, Ronald D. Pasquariello suggests that Pannenberg may well have chosen his category of pre-grasp or anticipatory grasping (*Vorgriff*) in "conscious contrast to Hegel's grasping or conceptual thought (*Begriff*) to stress the unity of history and its ultimate fulfillment only at the end whereas Hegel thought of it more in the present." "Pannenberg's Philosophical Foundations," *Journal of Religion* 56 (1976): 341.

59. As Taylor remarks, "God's Trinitarian fullness is the ground for affirming creation as an act of pure love, rather than as a necessity or a making good of a lack within God." *Pannenberg on the Triune God*, 64.

60. Catherine Mowry LaCugna, *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), 11 with 18n6, attributes this classic typology to Theodore de Régnon, *Études de théologie positive sur la Sainte Trinité*, 3 vols. (Paris: Retaux, 1892–98). LaCugna is right in seeing this typology as an oversimplification and one that has been increasingly challenged. See, for example, Philipp Gabriel Renczes, "The Scope of Rahner's Fundamental Axiom in the Patristic Perspective: A Dialogue of Systematic and Historical Theology," in *Rethinking Trinitarian Theology: Disputed Questions and Contemporary Issues in Trinitarian Theology*, ed. Giulio Maspero and Robert J. Woźniak (New York: T & T Clark, 2012), 267 with references in nn. 36 and 37. Yet there is perhaps something to this typology. In reading one or the other of the earlier Greek Fathers, one has the impression that some of them argued so well for the threeness of God that they ended up unable to come back to a well-expressed divine unity.

61. Barth's and Rahner's writings on Trinity have been translated into many languages. Whapham notes that Pannenberg's *Systematic Theology* has as well been translated into several languages and offers a brief initial assessment of the influence Pannenberg's trinitarian thought has so far had, more in Protestant circles and less in Roman Catholic ones. "Person" in the *Trinitarian Theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg*, 144–46. The recent appearance of Whapham's book (2012) and that of Taylor, *Pannenberg on the Triune God* (2007), witness to a continuing interest in Pannenberg's trinitarian thought on the part of English-speaking theologians. On the German scene we should note again Vechtel, *Trinität und Zukunft* (2001). Kärkkäinen helpfully summarizes a series of themes, especially those developed by Pannenberg (with Moltmann), which he sees as major contributions to trinitarian thinking. He refers to these themes, and especially as found in Pannenberg, as a "prelude to American responses to and reflections on the Trinity." *Trinity: Global Perspectives*, 148–50. We might well add that these themes often reflect an Idealist cast.

Toward the end of his book, *The Trinity in German Thought*, Powell proposes rather strongly, but quite correctly, that "the parameters of Trinitarian thinking in German thought were set in place by the end of the idealist period in nineteenth-

century philosophy.” He continues: “It is fair to claim that Trinitarian thought would not have enjoyed its twentieth-century revival without Hegel’s prior setting of the stage” (258), and “it [Idealism] set in motion powerful ideas that, in altered and sometimes disguised forms, issued finally in the renewal of Trinitarian thinking that has been the subject of this chapter [the twentieth century]” (259). We would surely want to add, especially regarding Pannenberg, reference to Schelling as well.

## Introduction to Part 4

1. For a contextualizing overview of German Idealism’s impact on American intellectual development, see Nicholas Boyle, “General Introduction: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries,” in *The Impact of Idealism: The Legacy of Post-Kantian German Thought*, ed. Nicholas Boyle and Liz Disley, vol. 1, *Philosophy and Natural Sciences*, ed. Karl Ameriks (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 24–29.

2. For a colorful history of St. Louis Hegelianism, see Henry A. Pochmann, *New England Transcendentalism and St. Louis Hegelianism: Phases in the History of American Idealism* (New York: Haskell House Publishers Ltd., 1948); a longer introduction to the St. Louis Hegelians and for a collection of their writings, *The St. Louis Hegelians*, 3 vols., ed. Michael H. DeArmey and James A. Good (Sterling, VA: Thoemmes Press, 2001); a particularly succinct and insightful review of the St. Louis Hegelians and their influence in the United States, Boyle, “General Introduction: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries,” 27–29, where he refers especially to Henry A. Pochmann, *German Culture in America: Philosophical and Literary Influences 1600–1900* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1957, 1961). In this 1957 volume, accessed February 22, 2014, <https://archive.org/details/germancultureina00poch>, Pochmann treats directly of the St. Louis Hegelians on 257–94. Over the course of his study, he provides a detailed review of German influences on American life and thought.

3. See James Allard, “Idealism in Britain and the United States,” in *The Cambridge History of Philosophy 1870–1945*, ed. Thomas Baldwin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 43–59; a contextualizing overview of German Idealism’s impact on British intellectual development, Boyle, “General Introduction,” in *The Impact of Idealism*, vol. 1, *Philosophy and Natural Sciences*, 22–24 and 29–34, where he makes particular reference to W. J. Mander, *British Idealism: A History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

4. Jan Olof Bengtsson, *The Worldview of Personalism: Origins and Early Development* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 1. This is an extraordinarily rich and rewarding study.

5. Bengtsson, *Worldview of Personalism*, 27.

6. For a further consideration of aspects of Hegel’s thought which personalist thinkers at times tend to accept and at others to reject, see Walter G. Muelder,

"Personalism's Debt to Hegel," in *The Boston Personalist Tradition in Philosophy, Social Ethics and Theology*, ed. Paul Deats and Carol Robb (Mercer, GA: Mercer University Press, 1986), 30–54. For his part, though he is less than enthusiastic about post-Hegelian revivalist trinitarian thought, Lewis Ayres does note the origins of personalist thought in Kant, Schelling, and Hegel. "Into the Cloud of Witnesses: Catholic Trinitarian Theology Beyond and Before its Modern 'Revivals,'" in *Rethinking Trinitarian Theology: Disputed Questions and Contemporary Issues in Trinitarian Theology*, ed. Giulio Maspero and Robert J. Woźniak (London: T & T Clark International, 2012), 8–9.

7. For an excellent study, with abundant references, of Hegelian influence on this developing understanding of subjectivity from the perspective of Hegel's influence on Pragmatist understandings of experience in the thought of Dewey and James, but especially of Peirce, see Dina Emundts, "Idealism and Pragmatism: The Inheritance of Hegel's Concept of Experience," in *The Impact of Idealism: The Legacy of Post-Kantian German Thought*, ed. Nicholas Boyle and Liz Disley, vol. 1, *Philosophy and Natural Sciences*, ed. Karl Ameriks (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 347–72. Justus Buchler identifies a number of Peirce's remarks concerning Hegel and his thought, including various references to Hegel in relation to pragmatism and pragmaticism. *Philosophical Writings of Peirce* (New York: Dover, 1955), index 383. A copy of these references has been brought together for convenient review in "On Hegel," accessed May 22, 2014, <http://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/us/peirce3.htm>.

8. By way of entry into Peirce's "trinitarian thought," see the insightful remarks in James Bradley, "Transformations in Speculative Philosophy," in *The Cambridge History of Philosophy 1870–1945*, ed. Thomas Baldwin, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 444–46, where on 444 he writes: "In line with his emphatic declarations of indebtedness to Augustine, Aquinas, Hegel, and, above all, Duns Scotus, actualization is understood by Peirce as a threefold serial structure, which he defines in terms of the categories of Firstness or Spontaneity, Secondness or Existence, and Thirdness, which is Community or Continuity." On the other hand, Josiah Royce said that Peirce's theory "is, historically speaking, a theory not derived from Hegel . . . [and that] Peirce's theory . . . promises new light upon matters which Hegel left profoundly problematic." *The Problem of Christianity: Lectures Delivered at the Lowell Institute in Boston, and at Manchester College, Oxford*, 2 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1913; reprinted 2 vols. in one, Hamden, CT: Archon, 1967), 2:186, cited as in the Archon reprint. In line with this remark, however, as I had noted earlier in my study, *Experience and Spirit: A Post-Hegelian Philosophical Theology* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), 99: "Royce himself had logically, though not necessarily in terms of historical dependence, viewed the transition from Hegel's dialectic to Peirce's theory of signs and interpretation to his own communitarian/individual theory as a process of widening of conception and of application (*The Problem of Christianity*, 2:185–86)." For a succinct

and insightful entry into the discussion concerning Peirce and Royce in relation to Hegel, and especially through consideration of Hegel's thought on essence, see John Kaag, "Hegel, Peirce, and Royce on the Concept of Essence," *Dialogue* 50 (2011): 557–75. John W. Cooper, in turn, sees parallels between Peirce's "Firstness," "Secondness," and "Thirdness," and the thought of Hegel and Schelling. He writes: "Peirce shares with Hegel and Schelling the view that the metaphysical structure of reality is triadic"; and, "Firstness, secondness, and thirdness are clearly reminiscent of Schelling's three potencies." *Panentheism: The Other God of the Philosophers: From Plato to the Present* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006), 137–39, with the quotes respectively on 138 and 139. A helpful point of entry into the well-documented more general influence, mediated through other thinkers as well as occurring more directly, of Schelling on American thought and especially that of Peirce is H. G. Callaway's discussion in his review of Franz Josef Wetz, *Friedrich W. J. Schelling: Zur Einführung* (Hamburg: Junius Verlag, 1996), "Schelling and the Background of American Pragmatism," accessed September 22, 2013, at <http://www.cspeirce.com/menu/library/aboutcsp/callaway/schelling.htm>.

More particularly concerning the complex relationship between Hegel's thought on experience, especially as found in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, and that of Peirce, see Emundts, "Idealism and Pragmatism," 350–68. Emundts variously notes "Peirce maintains that his three categories are taken over from Hegel" (353–54) and "after having said that he got the idea of phenomenology from Hegel, Peirce also claims that Hegel considered phenomenology in a 'fatally narrow spirit'" (355–56). Emundts draws attention to several important papers by Robert Stern: "Peirce, Hegel and the Category of Firstness," *International Yearbook of German Idealism* 5 (2007): 276–308; "Peirce, Hegel, and the Category of Secondness," "Peirce on Hegel: Nominalist or Realist," *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society* 41 (2005): 65–99. These three studies are reproduced in Robert Stern, *Hegelian Metaphysics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), along with Stern's "Hegel and Pragmatism," in *Hegelian Metaphysics*, 209–37. With regard to the relationship between Hegel and Peirce, we could almost say that what goes around comes around. Recently, John Burbidge has proposed an interpretation of Hegel's *Logic* as metaphysics, namely, that logical concepts say something about reality, by calling upon Peirce's idea, very generally stated, of appealing to experience to correct concepts. Burbidge proposes, again very generally stated, that this is what occurs in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* as Hegel moves from a phenomenological study to the conceptual world of his *Science of Logic*. "Hegel's *Logic* as Metaphysics," *Hegel Bulletin* 35 (2014): 100–15, esp. 110–12.

We can in regard to Hegel give the last word here to Peirce himself, who often enough commented on the strengths and especially the weaknesses of Hegel's thought: "The truth is that pragmatism is closely allied to the Hegelian absolute idealism, from which, however, it is sundered by its vigorous denial that the third category (which Hegel degrades to a mere stage of thinking) suffices to make the

world, or is even so much as self-sufficient. Had Hegel, instead of regarding the first two stages with his smile of contempt, held on to them as independent or distinct elements of the triune Reality, pragmatists might have looked up to him as the great vindicator of their truth. . . . For pragmatism belongs essentially to the triadic class of philosophical doctrines and is much more essentially so than Hegelianism is." "What Pragmatism Is," *The Monist* 15 (1905): 180–81, accessed September 5, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27899577?seq=1>.

And again concerning Schelling, for example, "I [Peirce] have begun [my task] by showing that *tychism* must give birth to an evolutionary cosmology, . . . , and to a Schelling-fashioned idealism which holds matter to be mere specialized and partially deadened mind. I may mention, . . . , that I was born and reared in the neighbourhood of Concord—I mean in Cambridge—at the time when Emerson, Hedge, and their friends were disseminating the ideas that they had caught from Schelling, . . . I am not conscious of having contracted any of that virus. Nevertheless, it is probable that some cultured bacilli, some benignant form of the disease was implanted in my soul, unawares, and that now, after long incubation, it comes to the surface, modified by mathematical conceptions and by training in physical investigations." "The Law of Mind," *The Monist* 2 (1892): 533–34, accessed September 23, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27897003?seq=4>.

Yet again concerning Schelling, Joseph L. Esposito stresses the Idealist character of Peirce's thought, especially the early Peirce. He refers, for example, to the pragmatist trinity of Peirce-James-Dewey, but suggests another trinity, that of Schelling-Hegel-Peirce. He writes that "in his capsule autobiographies he [Peirce] closely associates himself with German Idealism, and specifically the philosophy of Schelling. . . . In a letter to James he considered Schelling 'like a scientific man' and his own philosophy 'Schellingism transformed in the light of modern physics.' [Esposito's reference 138n2:] Letter dated January 18, 1894 in Ralph Barton Perry's *The Thought and Character of William James* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1935), 2, pp. 415f." "Peirce and *Naturphilosophie*," *Transactions of the Charles Sanders Peirce Society* 13 (1977): 122–41 with quote on 122, accessed January 28, 2014, <http://www.jstor.org/discover/10.2307/4031980?uid=3739920&uid=2134&uid=372791751&uid=2&uid=70&uid=3&uid=372791741&uid=3739256&uid=60&sid=21103351697927>. On 135, Esposito refers to Royce: "Royce, who may have known more of Schelling than his own works on idealism reveal, saw enough idealism in Peirce to have regarded him as a 'pure Schellingian.' [Esposito's reference 141n22:] This is reported in a letter from Herbert Nichols to Peirce in L-320 [Richard S. Robin. *Annotated Catalogue of the Papers of Charles S. Peirce* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1967)]."

9. Josiah Royce, *The Problem of Christianity: Lectures Delivered at the Lowell Institute in Boston, and at Manchester College, Oxford*, 2 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1913; reprinted 2 vols. in one, Hamden, CT: Archon, 1967). For a brief exposition of Royce on experience, see Schlitt, *Experience and Spirit*, 93–100, 123–25. In order



to recall Royce's intimate understanding of post-Kantian German Idealism, it might be well to note Royce's 1906 lectures, entitled "Aspects of Post-Kantian Idealism," at Johns Hopkins University, posthumously published as *Lectures on Modern Idealism*, ed. J. Loewenberg (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1919, 5th printing 1967). In lecture 4, "The Dialectical Method in Schelling," Royce speaks first of Idealists more generally (87–96) before briefly mentioning Fichte (96–98) and then masterfully focusing on Schelling's 1797 *System of Transcendental Idealism* (98–114). He continues to analyze this 1797 work in his further discussion of Schelling in lecture 5, "Schelling's Transcendental Idealism" (115–35). He then concentrates more on Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* as he dedicates lectures 6 through 9 to a prolonged discussion of Hegel's thought (136–231). Toward the end, Royce colorfully remarks: "The idealistic movement in later European thought, although frequently suppressed, although often deliberately ignored, has been as constant as the movement of a great river beneath masses of winter ice. Every now and then the ice breaks or melts, and the idealistic tendency comes to the light of consciousness. It is irrepressible, because it is human" (237–38). And more specifically regarding American pragmatism in particular, he notes: "In more recent times, post-Kantian idealism, influencing thought in France, in England, and in this country, has led to a complication of opinions which it would require many courses of lectures to unravel . . . in a measure, most of our own American pragmatists could be viewed as the outcome of the same movement" (2).

10. See John Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, in *The Later Works, 1925–1953*, ed. Jo Ann Boydston with associate textual editors, Patricia Baysinger and Barbara Levine (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1981, 1st ed. originally published 1925, 2nd ed. 1929) with, by way of example, Dewey's more general criticism of Idealism on 61–62. The phrases describing each of these three forms or phases of experience I refer to are taken from Francis E. George, "Dewey and Dialectic," in *Dewey and His Influence: Essays in Honor of George Estes Barton*, *Tulane Studies in Philosophy* 22, ed. Robert C. Whittemore (New Orleans: Tulane University, 1973), 22. On Dewey on experience, see briefly in Schlitt, *Experience and Spirit*, 100–07. For longer analyses of Dewey's thought, analyses carried out in support of the idea of an ongoing influence of Hegel on Dewey, see John R. Shook, James A. Good, and John Dewey, *John Dewey's Philosophy of Spirit, with the 1897 Lecture on Hegel* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010). In this volume see: John R. Shook, "Dewey's Naturalized Philosophy of Spirit and Religion," 3–55; and especially James A. Good, "Rereading Dewey's 'Permanent Hegelian Deposit,'" 56–89; also transcribed seminar lecture notes of Dewey's own 1897 seminar at the University of Chicago on Hegel, "Hegel's Philosophy of Spirit," 93–174. Shook and Good provide further bibliographic references concerning relationships between the thought of Hegel and that of Dewey, indicating in their view the influence of Hegel on Dewey's thought. Good in particular stresses the impact of Karl Rosenkranz's life of Hegel on Dewey (for example 62, with 183n22). Rosenkranz himself had

been an “auxiliary member of the St. Louis Philosophical Society [the St. Louis Hegelians]” (62). As a further indication of resemblances between the thought of various Americans and that of Hegel, we could note Good’s citation of a letter from Dewey to William James, dated May 6, 1891, in which Dewey wrote: “Would it horrify you, if I stated that your theory of emotions (where you seem to me to have completely made out your case) is good Hegelianism?” (188n67). Perhaps Dewey’s remark would have horrified James, given James’s overall critique of Hegel in James’s collected lectures, *A Pluralistic Universe* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1909), 83–129, accessed October 24, 2014, <https://archive.org/stream/apluralisticuni01jamegoog#page/n0/mode/2up>, and see Don Morse, “William James’s Neglected Critique of Hegel,” *Idealistic Studies* 35 (2005): 199–213.

See also briefly in Emundts, “Idealism and Pragmatism,” 349. In a look back, Dewey himself wrote that Hegel’s philosophy answered “a demand for unification that was doubtless an intense emotional craving, and yet was a hunger that only an intellectualized subject-matter could satisfy. . . . [T]he sense of divisions and separations that were, I suppose, borne in upon me as a consequence of a heritage of New England culture, divisions by way of isolation of self from the world, of soul from body, of nature from God, brought a painful oppression—or, rather, they were an inward laceration. . . . Hegel’s synthesis of subject and object, matter and spirit, the divine and the human, was . . . no mere intellectual formula; it operated as an immense release, a liberation. Hegel’s treatment of human culture, of institutions and the arts, involved the same dissolution of hard-and-fast dividing walls, and had a special attraction for me.” John Dewey, “From Absolutism to Experimentalism” (1930), in *The Later Works, 1925–1953*, ed. Jo Ann Boydston (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1981–90), vol. 5, 153. Quoted by Louis Menand, *The Metaphysical Club* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001), 266–67.

11. *The Analogy of Experience: An Approach to Understanding Religious Truth* (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), 33. For a succinct reminder that by “experience” Peirce, James, and Dewey meant far more than something epistemological, see John E. Smith, “The Reconception of Experience in Peirce, James and Dewey,” in John E. Smith, *America’s Philosophical Vision* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 17–35, esp. 35. For a fuller discussion of experience in pragmatist thought, see John E. Smith, *Purpose and Thought: The Meaning of Pragmatism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1978; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978, pagination the same in both editions), with special focus on Dewey, James and Peirce on experience, in chapter 3, “The New Conception of Experience,” 78–95; again, “The Reconception of Experience in Peirce, James and Dewey,” 17–35, with discussion of similarities and differences between the thought of Dewey and that of Hegel, but without focus on historical influences, on 111–15.

12. Smith himself has remarked that “[Robert C.] Neville is right in calling attention to the two traditions that have determined most of my thought—the devel-

opment of American philosophy starting with Edwards and moving to the pragmatists, and the tradition of German idealism which for me meant largely the tension between Kant and Hegel.” “Metaphysics, Experience, Being, and God: Response to Robert C. Neville,” in *Reason, Experience, and God: John E. Smith in Dialogue*, ed. Vincent M. Colapietro (New York: Fordham University Press, 1997), 131. See Robert C. Neville, “John E. Smith and Metaphysics,” in *Reason, Experience, and God: John E. Smith in Dialogue*, 71–72. Especially regarding experience and the validity and value of religious experience, a good point of entry into Smith’s longer engagement with the thought of Jonathan Edwards is Smith’s earlier study, the “Editor’s Introduction” to Jonathan Edwards, *Religious Affections*, ed. John E. Smith (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1959), 1–89, where Smith stresses several aspects of Edwards’s thought which we can see with hindsight as providing an opening toward American philosophical pragmatism. Among these many aspects or insights we might note what we can call Edwards’s appreciation of empiricism now expanded by Edwards in a holistic, spiritual direction (see, for instance, 52–53 taken within the context of the overall introduction) and Edwards’s understanding of the role of practice in relation to the discernment of true religious conversion (see in this latter regard especially 40–43, where Smith discusses Edwards’s twelfth sign of gracious affections.)

On Smith on experience, see in my study, *Experience and Spirit*, 107–21, with further bibliography indicated there. By way of additional comment here at the end of these references to, generally stated, Pragmatism on experience, I think it could be argued that many Western theories of experience can, to a certain extent, in a real sense find roots and something of their origin in Hegel’s efforts in his *Phenomenology of Spirit* to work out an understanding of the varied relationships between self and other. This would be especially true with regard to the first part of the text itself. See Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 1: *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, ed. Wolfgang Bonsiepen and Reinhard Heede (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1980), 63–70/*Phenomenology of Spirit* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 58–66. On the relationship between pragmatist thought on experience and Hegel’s *Phenomenology*, see briefly Emundts, “Idealism and Pragmatism,” 249–50.

13. Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *The Trinity: Global Perspectives* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007), 153–54, identifies “several factors [that] are shaping the thinking about God in North America . . . First . . . asking questions relevant to the multicultural, multid denominational, and somewhat pluralist context . . . Second . . . the theological currents increasingly include not only evangelical churches . . . but also various kinds of ‘Free Churches’ . . . Third, North America provides fertile soil for the rise of contextual theologies for the simple reason of its multicultural population.” He refers to further remarks in this regard in his book, *The Doctrine of God: A Global Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2004), 165–67, 239–40.

14. The following, for example, give a first sense of this approach to trinitarian reflection as a response to the needs of people in particular or even marginalized

situations: Miguel H. Díaz, “The Life-giving Reality of God from Black, Latin American, and US Hispanic Theological Perspectives,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Trinity*, ed. Peter C. Phan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 259–73; Patricia A. Fox, “Feminist Theologies and the Trinity,” in *Cambridge Companion to The Trinity*, 274–90. The Latin American liberationist theologian, Leonardo Boff, is a particularly striking example of one in whom we can recognize trans-Atlantic “echoes” of post-Kantian German Idealism’s trinitarian thinking which give expression to Idealist insights in light of the needs of those who find themselves in marginalized situations. He works with great concern for liberation in *Trinity and Society* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1988) and *Holy Trinity: Perfect Community* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000). From an explicitly praxis starting point and perspective, see David N. Power and Michael Downey, *Living the Justice of the Triune God* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2012).

15. Kärkkäinen, *Trinity: Global Perspectives*, 151, entitles the overall section of his book on American traditions “North American Traditions: Dialogue with European Views.” He relates the thought of the North American trinitarian thinkers to several European trinitarian thinkers, with brief reference to German Idealism (233).

## Chapter 9

1. Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *The Trinity: Global Perspectives* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007), 163, where he quotes R. Kendall Soulen, “YHWH the Triune God,” *Modern Theology* 15 (1999): 35, speaking of Jenson as “perhaps the major trinitarian theologian writing in English today.” He also cites Carl Braaten as calling Jenson the “first American theologian to write a systematic construction of the Trinity.” “God and the Gospel: Pluralism and Apostasy in American Theology,” *Lutheran Theological Journal* 25 (1991): 47. See further laudatory remarks and references cited by Stanley J. Grenz, *Rediscovering the Triune God: The Trinity in Contemporary Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2004), 106–07.

2. Robert W. Jenson, “A Theological Autobiography, to Date,” *Dialog: A Journal of Theology* 46 (2007): 46–54, with quote from 51. Much of the content of these introductory remarks is taken from this article. On his being Lutheran, note also his self-description as “a representative of an in Britain now exotic species of Christian: I am a Lutheran.” “What is the Point of Trinitarian Theology?” in *Trinitarian Theology Today: Essays on Divine Being and Act*, ed. Christoph Schwöbel (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1995), 31. See more generally, Carl E. Braaten, “Robert William Jenson—A Personal Memoir,” in *Trinity, Time, and Church: A Response to the Theology of Robert W. Jenson*, ed. Colin E. Gunton (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2000), 1–9.

3. Jenson, "A Theological Autobiography," 52.

4. Jenson, "A Theological Autobiography," 53.

5. Jenson, "A Theological Autobiography," 49. Jenson subsequently published a version of the thesis as *Alpha and Omega: A Study in the Theology of Karl Barth* (New York: Thomas Nelson, 1963), as well as another study on Barth's thought, *God after God: The God of the Past and the God of the Future Seen in the Work of Karl Barth* (Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill, 1969).

6. "Jenson—A Personal Memoir," 4.

7. Wolfhart Pannenberg, Review of *Systematic Theology*, vols. 1 and 2, by Robert W. Jenson, in *First Things* (May 2000): 1–13, with the quote on 1, accessed August 3, 2013, <http://www.firstthings.com/article/2007/01/systematic-theology-volumes-i-amp-ii-25>.

8. Robert W. Jenson, *The Triune Identity: God According to the Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982), hereafter mostly cited in the text by page number and generally referred to, especially in notes, as *Triune Identity*. Emphasis in quotations reflects the original.

9. Robert W. Jenson, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1: *The Triune God* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), hereafter referred to as *Triune God*.

10. Among them, Robert W. Jenson, "Second Locus: The Triune God," in *Christian Dogmatics*, ed. Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 83–191, based in part on *Triune Identity*. For a listing of a number of Jenson's other writings on Trinity, see: Grenz, *Rediscovering the Triune God*, 249n178; Kärkkäinen, *Trinity: Global Perspectives*, 164n8.

Among a growing number of insightful studies of Jenson's trinitarian thought, I have found the following particularly helpful, especially from the point of view of present interest in identifying possible Idealist influence on that thought: the constructively critical chapters in Colin E. Gunton, ed., *Trinity, Time, and Church: A Response to the Theology of Robert W. Jenson* (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans, 2000), chapters covering various aspects of Jenson's trinitarian thought, among which are of special interest here: Jeremy Ive, "Robert W. Jenson's Theology of History," 146–57; Wolfhart Pannenberg, "Eternity, Time, and the Trinitarian God," 62–70; A. N. Williams, "The Parlement of Foules and the Communion of Saints: Jenson's Appropriation of Patristic and Medieval Theology," 188–200; furthermore, Grenz, *Rediscovering the Triune God*, 106–16, where he refers primarily to Jenson's *Triune God*; Kärkkäinen, *Trinity: Global Perspectives*, 162–77, where he works more with Jenson's *Triune Identity*, while drawing as well on Jenson's *Triune God* (he considers his approach and that of Grenz as complementary); Scott R. Swain, *The God of the Gospel: Robert Jenson's Trinitarian Theology* (Downer's Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2013), esp. 63–141, where in chapters 3 and 4 (77–120) he refers mainly to *Triune God* when he presents Jenson's trinitarian reading of God's identity in the Old and New Testaments, but where in chapter 5 (121–41) he, it should be noted, cites

much more often Jenson's earlier work, *Triune Identity*, as he "analyzes the major implications Jenson draws from his theological interpretation of Scripture for the being of the gospel's God" (26).

11. John Webster, "Systematic Theology after Barth: Jüngel, Jenson, and Gunton," in *The Modern Theologians: An Introduction to Christian Theology since 1918*, ed. David F. Ford with Rachel Muers (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 256. It is interesting to note that Jenson has not let drop the title of his 1982 monograph on the Trinity, *The Triune Identity*. Rather, he has used the phrase as the title of the second of three parts of vol. 1 of his *Systematic Theology*, *The Triune God*, 61. In a 1995 essay, Jenson continued to refer readers to *Triune Identity* for "my understanding of trinitarian doctrine generally," and notes this work can be improved. "What Is the Point of Trinitarian Theology?" 36n5. For a particularly helpful, more synthesizing summary of Jenson's trinitarian thought in *Triune Identity*, with reference as well to "Second Locus: The Triune God," in *Christian Dogmatics*, vol. 1, see Ted Peters, *GOD as Trinity: Relationality and Temporality in Divine Life* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), 128–34.

12. *Triune Identity*, 84 with 100, citing Gregory of Nazianzus, *Orations* 32.28.

13. *Triune Identity*, 157n154, with reference to *God after God*, 33–35, where he says "Hegel brought the Christian synthesis or accommodation to its perfection, by defining reality as history" (34).

14. With careful nuance, Jenson sees this mutually constituting movement of Trinity as the overcoming, as well, of the last vestiges of a male view of a dominating God. *Triune Identity*, 144.

15. Ekkehard Mühlenberg, *Die Unendlichkeit Gottes bei Gregor von Nyssa* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966).

16. In referring to a Hegelian coloring to Jenson's systematic theology, George Hunsinger has been rather negatively critical of that theology overall. "Robert Jenson's *Systematic Theology*: A Review Essay," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 55 (2002): 161–200, on Trinity esp. 175–200. He writes, for example: "It is Hegel, more than any other who determines Jenson's view of the trinity . . . Jenson develops his trinitarian proposal within the confines of a broadly 'Hegelian' metaphysics" (175); "Hegel's presence in the background is unmistakable" (195); "His [Jenson's] vision of the great consummation transcends, as does much else in his soteriology, the Hegelian straight jacket that constrains it" (200).

17. John Byung-Tek Song, "An Assessment of Robert Jenson's Hermeneutics on Divine Im/Passibility and the Emotions of God," *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 15 (2013): 87, accessed September 29, 2013, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1468-2400.2012.00653.x/pdf>. Song refers to Richard A. Muller, "Incarnation, Immutability, and the Case for Classical Theism," *Westminster Theological Journal* 45 (1983): 23. However, Muller himself does not speak there of "the philosophical ethos of our day." He refers, rather, to "a new perspective on

philosophy . . . developed by Hegel, Fichte, and Schelling.” Still, Song himself has been quite perceptive in his own remark specifically concerning Jenson in relation to Hegel, Fichte, and Schelling.

18. Song, “An Assessment of Robert Jenson’s Hermeneutic,” 87, citing David Bentley Hart, *The Beauty of the Infinite: The Aesthetics of Christian Truth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 156–57.

19. Hart, *Beauty of the Infinite*, 160–66.

20. Hart, *Beauty of the Infinite*, xi.

21. Hart, *Beauty of the Infinite*, 160. For Hart’s particularly positive and insightful overall reading of Jenson on Trinity, see “The Lively God of Robert Jenson,” *First Things*, Issue Archives, October 2005, accessed October 13, 2013, <http://www.firstthings.com/article/2007/01/the-lively-god-of-robert-jenson-4>.

22. Hart, *Beauty of the Infinite*, 161.

23. Wesley J. Wildman, “Basic Christological Distinctions,” *Theology Today* 64 (2007): 291.

24. Paul D. Molnar, “Robert W. Jenson’s *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1, *The Triune God*,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 52 (1999): 122, cited by Grenz, *Rediscovering the Triune God*, 115.

25. Jeremy Ive, “Robert W. Jenson’s Theology of History,” in *Time, Trinity, and Church: A Response to the Theology of Robert W. Jenson*, ed. Colin E. Gunton (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2000), 157, emphasis in the original, again cited by Grenz, *Rediscovering the Triune God*, 115. Kärkkäinen refers to Molnar (as cited in the note immediately above) and Ive as he observes that “in contemporary theology, reference to Hegel has become a mantra (often used in relation to Pannenberg’s theology too) that can be called to aid whenever problems such as the ones related to Jenson’s proposal arise.” *Trinity: Global Perspectives*, 174n73.

26. A situation aptly corrected with a major study, Robert W. Jenson, *America’s Theologian: A Recommendation of Jonathan Edwards* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).

27. Jenson, “A Theological Autobiography,” 49.

28. Robert W. Jenson, “Parting Ways?” *First Things*, Issue Archives, May 1995, accessed July 17, 2012, <http://www.firstthings.com/article/2008/09/001-parting-ways-22>. Braaten, close colleague of Jenson’s, complements Jenson’s own remarks when he notes that Jenson “taught [at Luther College] what he knew and believed with impassioned vigor and uncompromising integrity. That included . . . serious engagement with the great thinkers of German Protestantism—Immanuel Kant, Georg Hegel, and Friedrich Schleiermacher.” “Jenson—A Personal Memoir,” 4–5.

29. Jenson, “A Theological Autobiography,” 49.

30. In *Triune God (Systematic Theology*, vol. 1), Jenson makes several passing references to Fichte as well, but I have not noted any in *Triune Identity*. He seems not to have referred to Schelling by name in either of these volumes.

31. Robert W. Jenson, *The Knowledge of Things Hoped for: The Sense of Theological Discourse* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), 158–233, with the quotation on 233n327, the quotation being cited by Colin Gunton, “Creation and Mediation in the Theology of Robert W. Jenson: An Encounter and a Convergence,” in *Time, Trinity, and Church: A Response to the Theology of Robert W. Jenson*, ed. Colin E. Gunton (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2000), 90n25.

32. On *Triune Identity*, 157n154, Jenson refers to his further remarks in *God after God*, 33–35. There Jenson admits that Hegel speaks of reality as history and provides a definition of reality as freedom, but Hegel is really searching for logical necessity. So, “the God of Hegel is the perfected realization of the God of past history. . . . Reality is history, says Hegel, but means a history in which *all is already decided*” (35). Jenson reiterates these points on 61. In this discussion, he cites Hegel’s *Phenomenology* and *Encyclopedia*.

33. Robert W. Jenson, “Eighth Locus: The Holy Spirit,” in *Christian Dogmatics*, vol. 2, ed. Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 169, cited by Hart, *Beauty of the Infinite*, 157. Jenson reflects at greater length on Hegel, his system, and his understanding of Trinity, on 167–71.

34. For a wider consideration of Hegel on spirit by Jenson, see “Eighth Locus: The Holy Spirit,” 167–70.

35. Jenson continues, except in historical references, to speak of “three identities of one being” in *Triune God*, where in 106n115 he refers to his earlier work, *Triune Identity*, 105–11. He does, however, note in *Triune God*, 117n7, that, in difference with what he had said previously, Father, Son, and Spirit are indeed persons in the sense that they can address and converse with other persons. In *Triune God*, 123, in response probably to critical remarks concerning his notion of one divine person and three identities, Jenson says that “when the Trinity is regarded as in *one way* personal, and Father, Son, and Spirit as in variously *other ways* personal, then Father, Son, and Spirit can be fully acknowledged as persons and also interpreted as poles in the Trinity’s personal life.”

36. For example, Kärkkäinen, *Trinity: Global Perspectives*, 170–71 and 174–75.

37. Wolfhart Pannenberg, for example, argues that “the one divine essence taken by itself, without the persons, is not personal, not the one personal God. Otherwise it would have to count as a fourth person in addition to Father, Son, and Spirit.” “Eternity, Time, and the Trinitarian God,” 170, citing Jenson, *Systematic Theology*, 1:116 and 122. In referring to these two pages, Pannenberg documents in effect that Jenson maintains in *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1: *The Triune God*, his position argued in his earlier study, *Triune Identity*, that person is to be affirmed of God as a whole. We might note, however, that Jenson’s revised Hegelian understanding of person would not seem to mean that the one divine essence could be considered personal independent of the mutual interaction of the three identities.

38. Of particular interest regarding Jenson’s proposal of a single divine trinitarian person, see *Triune Identity*, 144–47 and 173–76, esp. 175 regarding the



Trinity as person. Swain, *God of the Gospel*, 138, is particularly helpful in bringing together Jenson's somewhat expanded understanding, in *Triune God*, 138, of God's being personal: God is a "subsisting *self-consciousness*" (essentially the Augustinian-Hegelian understanding of person); there is the threefold structure "of the Father's *singular self-consciousness*"; and "the dialogical, interpersonal relationships of his [God's] *three* subsistent social relations."

39. As noted in our review of aspects of Jenson's trinitarian thought, Jenson refers explicitly to "Hegel's definition of spirit as the relation between self and not-self, which just so is the being of the self," see *Triune Identity*, 123. In *Triune God*, 20n20, Jenson acknowledges Hegel's "deepest reading" regarding consciousness but "disappointing concluding capitulation to the doctrine of identity" in the *Phenomenology*. Jenson notes that he is proposing a notion of infinite person to counter Fichte's argument that God cannot be personal since a person must be a bounded, finite self. "Second Locus: The Triune God," 170.

One might wonder as well whether or not someone like Albrecht Ritschl, with his strong emphasis on the single personhood of God, might not have had a role in Jenson's insistence on the single personhood of God. On Ritschl, see Dale M. Schlitt, "Albrecht Ritschl on God as Personal and as Loving Will," *Theoforum* 42 (2012): 229–72.

40. Though with regard to Jenson we have here focused more on his references to Augustine and Hegel regarding the triune God as a single divine Person, it is striking to note that Schelling spoke as well in terms of one divine Person, but of course with much greater emphasis on the three differing potencies becoming differing Persons: "The actual [divine] self, is re-established [at the end of time], only with the difference that now there are three different names, that the three forms are now three personalities. They are however only three *different* names of the same *absolute* personality"/"das wirkliche Selbst wieder hergestellt, nur mit dem Unterschiede, daß jetzt drei verschiedene Namen sind, daß die drei Gestalten jetzt drei Persönlichkeiten sind. Sie sind aber nur drei *verscheidene* Namen derselben *absoluten* Persönlichkeit." *Urfassung der Philosophie der Offenbarung*, ed. Walter E. Ehrhardt (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1992), 192:30–34 (my translation).

41. Jenson's rejection of any beginning in a pretemporal state can be illustrated by his critique of Barth who, as Jenson says, "locates Christ's function as God's centering object not in Christ's final reality but in his primal reality." *Triune Identity*, 180, and see more generally, 141. We can find at least inklings of several aspects of Jenson's future trinitarian thought already in his book, *Alpha and Omega*, 151–71, based on his doctoral dissertation and published in 1963. There, toward the end, he criticizes the notion of pretemporal eternity (151) and reinterprets the "pre" in predestination (159–60). He does not like speaking of God acting "to" Jesus but, rather "through" him (168). God is that acting in temporal history, "a God who *happens among us*" (162, with quote on 168, and see, for example, 110–11).

Jenson prolongs his own reflection on what the “pre” means in relation to Jesus in *Triune God*, 138–44. During this reflection, he speaks of Barth in language which has a rather strong Schellingian ring to it. For example, Jenson says that “according to Barth, God’s being is most decisively construed by the notion of *decision*. God is so unmitigatedly personal that his free decision is not limited even by his ‘divine nature’: what he is, he himself chooses” (140). There may be more of the Schellingian notion of freedom in Barth’s trinitarian thought, especially that of the later volumes of Barth’s *Church Dogmatics* than we had previously noted.

42. In “The Point of Trinitarian Theology,” 39, Jenson speaks of the Father as “the ‘whence’ of divine events,” the Spirit as “the ‘whither’ of God’s life,” and the Son as “God as his own ‘specious present.’” He even speaks of a narrative causality among the three divine identities (42). He repeats the identification of Father with “whence,” Spirit with “whither,” and Son with “specious present” in *Triune God*, 218–19.

43. In summarizing Schelling, *Urfassung der Philosophie der Offenbarung, Philosophische Bibliothek*, vols. 445a and 445b with continuous pagination, ed. Walter E. Ehrhardt (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1992), 208.15–211.19, we previously noted that for Schelling the Father is the whole God in that all being is in him and the Son is the whole God in that he has mastery of being and the Spirit is the whole God in that he has mastery of being in as it arises from Father and Son, reconciled being. So we must conceive of the three potencies as three successive masters or rulers of being in line with temporal succession. The time before creation is then that of the Father, the time of excluding power, a form of pastness. The time of creation is that of the Son, the present time of actual creation and the great ages of the world (*Weltzeit*). The Father was before all time, the Son the personality ruling during creation and the Spirit the future and last ruler of fulfilled creation as return to the beginning. In all of this the glory of the Father and of the Son comes to fullness in the glory of the Spirit. The glory of the Father and of the Son, and consequently the Father and the Son themselves, are not surpassed but continue therein.

However, as also previously noted, Schelling’s notion of the Father is complex. It serves to refer, in a way, to what we have come to call “immanent” Trinity (though acknowledging that prior to this point there is for Schelling a moment of initial fullness) for Schelling the initial realm of possibility as such. And in this sense the Father was before all time. And yet, there is a sense in which the Father is the first of the three divine potencies, and thus to some extent at least characterizable as past.

On Schelling on time, see chap. 2, n. 21 above for a brief listing of several studies. Again, by way of entry into the question, see Drew M. Dalton, “Being and Time for Schelling: An Exploration of Schelling’s Theory of Temporality and Existence,” *Idealistic Studies* 38 (2009): 175–84. It will be helpful to recall that Walter Kasper has studied Schelling’s understanding of time from Schelling’s early works through to and including the later philosophy. *Das Absolute in der Geschichte*:

*Philosophie und Theologie der Geschichte in der Spätphilosophie Schellings* (Mainz: Matthias-Grünewald, 1965), 241–65.

44. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 27, with the following comment by J. N. Findlay in “Analysis of the Text”: “Time with its essential, living self-differentiation, is the very Notion present in actual existence,” 501. A text in German reads: “So ist sie [die Zeit] der daseyende Begriff selbst.” Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 9, *Phänomenologie des Geistes* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1980), 34:20–21. In a similar vein: “Time . . . appears as the destiny and necessity of Spirit that is not yet complete within itself” (487)/“Die Zeit erscheint daher als das Schicksal und die Nothwendigkeit des Geistes, der nicht in sich vollendet ist” (429:13–14). On Hegel’s interpretation of “time” in the *Phenomenology*, see Alan B. Brinkley, “Time in Hegel’s Phenomenology,” in *Tulane Studies in Philosophy*, vol. 9, *Studies in Hegel* (New Orleans: Tulane University, 1960), 3–15. Among Brinkley’s remarks on Hegel on time, the following will be of particular present interest: “The future appears in the present because it has denied the past” (6); “Hegel regards the temporality of the notion or the necessary appearance of the spirit in time, as reality itself” (9). See also Michael Murray, “Time in Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*,” *Review of Metaphysics* 33 (1981): 682–705 where he traces the development of the notion of time through the *Phenomenology* and interprets its meaning at various stages in that development. Murray’s references to time and Trinity would lead one to think that in the *Phenomenology* Hegel linked Father with past, Son with present, and Spirit with future (695–97). More generally, on time in Hegel’s thought, see: Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 20, *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse* (1830), ed. Wolfgang Bonsiepen and Hans-Christian Lucas, with Udo Rameil (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1992), §§ 257–59/*Hegel’s Philosophy of Nature*, part 2 of *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences* (1830), trans. A. V. Miller, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970, 2004), §§ 257–59; and, Peter Tawny, *Die Zeit der Dreieinigkeit: Untersuchungen zur Trinität bei Hegel und Schelling* (Würzburg: Könighausen & Neumann, 2002), esp. 179–94; Catherine Malabou, *The Future of Hegel: Plasticity, Temporality and Dialectic* (London: Routledge, 2005). In addition to Hegel’s remarks on time in the 1830 edition of the *Encyclopedia*, Malabou recalls, on 6 with 199n15, Hegel’s earlier remarks in his Jena philosophy of nature lectures (1804–05 and 1805–06) as well as in the 1817 and 1827 editions of the *Encyclopedia*. In partial critique of Heidegger’s reading of Hegel on time, Malabou finds in Hegel’s thought not only the more standard notion of time as sequence of “nows,” so to speak, “the vulgar, ordinary understanding [as expressed by Heidegger],” but another notion, namely, that of “originary temporality” which “forms that succession [of nows]” (191, see 1–5). Malabou suggests that “the times of Hegel’s philosophy, with a generosity Heidegger consistently denies, were perhaps generous enough to offer him a name for his own time of ontological difference” (192). It is interesting to note that Malabou says she “decided to

take as my starting point for this study not Hegel's *Philosophy of Nature* but the *Philosophy of Spirit*" (191). It may well be that in so proceeding she is reflecting somewhat the tendency in a good amount of French reading and interpretation of Hegel to stress the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Though Malabou chooses to work with the *Encyclopedia* as such (in a way illustrated by her reference to "the System as the dwelling place of spirit," 153), she still refers often and at crucial moments to the *Phenomenology* (e.g., 1, chap. 12 [167–83]) which in a way, within Hegel's encyclopedically expressed system of spirit as movement of thought, is where he treats of "phenomenology" in the third part, which is on spirit. This might help explain her working with a more originary notion of temporality than that seemingly present early on in the *Encyclopedia's* second part, namely, the one on nature.

45. Jenson himself writes that "time is the form of God's life with and for us." *God after God*, 128, cited by Peters, *GOD as Trinity*, 135. Grenz speaks of Jenson's "understanding of the divine self-disclosure as narrative, temporal, and eschatological," *Rediscovering the Triune God*, 113, and Kärkkäinen, *Trinity: Global Perspectives*, 172, considers this an accurate description of Jenson's project. With particular reference to narrative, it would be interesting to follow up on a report that Xavier Tilliette refers to Schelling's philosophy as a narrative philosophy, perhaps pointing to a possible relation with Jenson's notion of a trinitarian narrative more explicitly developed in Jenson's *Triune God* but strongly present as well in *Triune Identity*.

46. I am grateful to Prof. Renata Furst, who first drew my attention to this notion of a possible shift from movement of the concept to temporally based plot-line. Without suggesting that Jenson has been influenced by the following works, it would perhaps be rewarding to review his working with narrative and plot in light of studies in literary theory such as, for example, Ruth Ronen, chapter 5, entitled "Fictional Events and the Intricacies of Plot," in *Possible Worlds in Literary Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 144–74. Ronen summarizes the chapter as follows: "This chapter has traced stages in the history of narratological studies, from classical structuralism to current semantics of possible worlds, as stages located along one continuous line of theorizing about plot-structures" (173). Though her study concerns fiction, there might well be insights to be gained from examining Jenson's trinitarian narrative in light of her analyses of plot theory. She notes that "fictional narratives are not necessarily different 'objectively' from non-fictional narratives" (174). In relation to Jenson's working with narrative, it would be helpful as well to consider further notions such as character and time, as does Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 1983, 2002). Prof. Furst drew my attention to these studies as well.

47. *Triune God*, 81 with n. 53.

48. *God after God*, 34.

49. *God after God*, 169.

50. *God after God*, 184.

51. *God after God*, 191.

52. *God after God*, 173.

53. See further on Barth on God and time, for example, in Jenson, *God after God*, 123–35. The following doctoral thesis on Barth should be noted: Adrian E. V. Langdon, “God the Eternal Contemporary: Trinity, Eternity, and Time in Karl Barth’s *Church Dogmatics*,” PhD diss., McGill University, Montréal, 2008, accessed October 14, 2013, <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/obj/thesescanada/vol1/QMM/TC-QMM-40681.pdf>. Langdon brings to the fore the various understandings of time with which Barth is working. He also presents and evaluates Jenson’s reading of Barth on time and Trinity (53–90). This study has been published under the same title (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2012). With its emphasis on the third and fourth volumes of Barth’s *Church Dogmatics*, Langdon’s study opens the possibility of exploring at greater length the possible similarities between Barth’s notion of time in relation to Trinity and Hegel’s overall notion of time. See, for example, Langdon’s brief remark concerning Hegel and Schelling (283n9 and 194–95 with n. 9, both references to the electronic version).

On Trinity and time in Barth and Jenson, see also Jason M. Curtis, “Trinity and Time: An Investigation into God’s Being and His Relationship with the Created Order, with Special Reference to Karl Barth and Robert W. Jenson,” PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 2007, accessed October 15, 2013, <https://www.era.lib.ed.ac.uk/bitstream/1842/2216/1/Curtis%20JM%20thesis%202007.pdf>. Curtis points to various senses in which Barth and Jenson use the word “time.” Curtis himself briefly raises the question of a possible trajectory, in the understanding of time, from Hegel to Barth to Jenson (3n11) and, we might ourselves add Schelling and Pannenberg. At the same location, Curtis provides a helpful listing of various places in Hegel’s writings where Hegel speaks of “time.”

Kasper contrasts Hegel’s understanding of time as a necessary moment or element in the development of Spirit with Schelling’s understanding of time as God’s freely determined actualization of the eternal possibility (*Möglichkeit*) of time as temporal succession. *Das Absolute in der Geschichte*, esp. 259–60. We might note, however, that Hegel also moves from a form of possibility regarding time in that his encyclopedic moment of logic as movement of pure thought gives, in principle and intention at least, structure to the development of history. However, Kasper seems correctly to note the ultimately necessary realization of logical movement in realphilosophical or, here, historical form. He regularly brings out the importance for Schelling of time as the result of free decision and says that only a further working out of trinitarian speculation will clarify whether time is a moment in the development of the Absolute or something truly positive with a continuing significance for the Absolute. The loose rephrasing in this last sentence is based in Kasper’s words: “In der Trinitätsspekulation erst wird es sich entscheiden, ob die Zeit nur Ausfaltung und Rückkehr des Absoluten in der Geschichte ist oder ob der Zeit wirklich positive, bleibende Bedeutung angesichts des Absoluten zukommt” (265).

54. See Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 9, *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, p. 109 line 4 to p. 119 line 25 (*Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (New York: Oxford, 1977), 111–23. In *Triune God*, 155–56, with 155n61, Jenson explicitly refers to Hegel's treatment of master and slave as found in the *Phenomenology*.

55. Jenson is not denying Christ's deity, which is finally fully established in the eschatological unity of the then immanent Trinity (140–41), with this final establishment reminiscent of Schelling's idea that the potencies become fully Persons at the end of time. Jenson further clarifies his position when he writes in *Triune God*: "But once it is clear that there truly is only one individual person who is the Christ, who lives as one of the Trinity and one of us, and that he is personal precisely as one of us, then to say that he as creature is our savior—or that he as creature exercises any divine power—is simply to say that he plays his role in the triune life and does not need to abstract from his human actuality to do so" (144–45).

In *Triune God*, 220n65, Jenson refers back to his earlier *Triune Identity*, 183n22, concerning Hegel and self-consciousness. And see also in *Triune God*, where Jenson speaks of the overall danger of enslavement to avoid which "each [in mutual discourse] must be both subject for and object of the other" (228).

56. On Hegel's idea of the true infinite, see, with further references, Dale M. Schlitt, *Experience and Spirit: A Post-Hegelian Philosophical Theology* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), 353–63, or a somewhat wider consideration in Dale M. Schlitt, *Hegel's Trinitarian Claim: A Critical Reflection* (Leiden: Brill, 1984; Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2012), 249–75 (1984), 159–82 (2012).

57. Jenson speaks of Gregory of Nyssa on infinity in *Triune God*, 212, 215–16, and refers the reader to *Triune Identity*, 111–13, 162–63 on Gregory. He remarks briefly on Gregory as well in *Triune God*, 152–53 with n. 40, where he refers to *Triune Identity*, 111–14, 161–68.

58. By way of comparison with Schelling, note Kasper's conclusion that God's eternity is for Schelling the "depth dimension" (*Tiefendimension*) of time and does not stand before, after, or under time. *Die Absolute in der Geschichte*, 382.

59. Ekkehard Mühlenberg, *Die Unendlichkeit Gottes bei Gregor von Nyssa* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966).

60. For example, Hart, *Beauty of the Infinite*, 161, 193n54. Hart himself returns to Gregory of Nyssa toward the end of this study (402–11). There he speaks of Gregory as being much richer, so to speak, in his understanding of history and eschatology than either Plato or the later Idealists. Though Hart may, then, not himself reflect or echo more directly the post-Kantian German Idealist trinitarian legacy, he nevertheless finds that Idealist legacy of value as an at least negative point of reference through which he clarifies his own understanding of and identification with the thought of Gregory.

It is indeed surprising to see the conclusion to a temporal infinity drawn from a reading of Gregory of Nyssa since Gregory himself argued strongly against

Eunomius when he insists Eunomius misunderstood and misrepresented the begottenness of the Son of God. Gregory says in effect that Eunomius temporalized what is a nontemporal begottenness, namely, that of the Son, without temporal beginning. See, for example, the remarks by Mühlenberg, *Unendlichkeit Gottes*, 111–12. And see, again for example, Gregory of Nyssa, *Against Eumoni*, in Philip Shaff and Henry Wace, eds., *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, vol. 5, trans. H. A. Wilson (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1893.), book 1 §§ 25 and 26, pp. 67–71. There Gregory writes: “But the existence which is all-sufficient, everlasting, world-enveloping, is not in space, nor in time; it is before these, and above these in an ineffable way; self-contained, knowable by faith alone; immeasurable by ages; without the accompaniment of time; seated and resting in itself, with no associations of past or future; there being nothing beside and beyond itself, whose passing can make something past and something future. Such accidents are confined to the creation, whose life is divided with time’s divisions into memory and hope. But within that transcendent and blessed Power all things are equally present as in an instant: past and future are within its all-encircling grasp and its comprehensive view” (69–70). Most of this quote would tend to stress the otherness of God in relation to time, yet the last words, “past and future are within its all-encircling grasp and its comprehensive view” may serve as an opening to Jenson’s reading of divine temporal infinity in terms of temporal unhinderedness (see below). Jenson says that “as my language has already been driven by the logic of the case to show, the infinity that is, according to Gregory, God’s *ousia*, is *temporal* infinity.” *Triune Identity*, 165. And on 182n9 attached to this quote: “For a surplus of citations, *ibid.* [Mühlenberg, *Unendlichkeit Gottes*], esp. pp. 106–11.” On the other hand, it could be noted that Mühlenberg closes this section with the following, including several qualifications: “Gregor faktisch nur die zeitliche Ausdehnungslosigkeit Gottes in dem Begriff des Unendlichen behauptet. Aber er meint, daß das Unendliche doch in jeder Hinsicht für Gott gelte. Denn die menschliche Vernunft kann den Gedanken der Größe nur fassen, indem sie durch die Zeit die Grenzen der gewordenen Dinge findet. Ist ein Ding der Zeit entzogen, wie die ungeschaffene göttliche Natur, so kann die Vernunft keine Grenzen erkennen. . . . Der Begriff der Unendlichkeit ist zwar bisher nur in negative Weise als Ausdruck für die Zeitlosigkeit aufgetaucht. Aber er kann auch positiv verstanden werden, indem er die Ewigkeit Gottes aussagt”/“In fact Gregory only asserts the absence of temporal extension. But he means that the infinite in any case, though, is valid for God. For human reason can only grasp the thought of size in that it finds through time the limits of that which becomes. If something is removed from time, as is the case with the uncreated divine nature, then reason can acknowledge no limit. . . . The concept of infinity has indeed arisen so far only in a negative way. But it can also be understood in a positive sense, in that it expresses the eternity of God” (roughly translated by myself). *Unendlichkeit Gottes*, 110–11. Shortly thereafter, Mühlenberg adds: “Der trinitarische Gott liegt außerhalb jeglicher Begrenzung, da er über die Schöpfung

erhaben ist. Er ist zeitlich gesehen das Unbegrenzte oder, wie Gregor auch sagt, das Ewige”/“The trinitarian God lies outside every limit, since he is elevated above creation. He is with respect to time the Unlimited or, as Gregory also says it, the Eternal” (118) (my translation). So Jenson speaks of the triune God’s “temporal unhinderedness” (*Triune Identity*, 166; see *Triune God*, 216). It would be of interest to see how far Jenson seems to have gone in his own creative way beyond what Gregory of Nyssa himself has said about God when Jenson speaks of a temporal infinity of Father, Son, and Spirit (see, for example, *Triune Identity*, 170–71). It would seem that he has moved from “temporal unhinderedness” to “embracing time” to a “temporal” or even “temporalized infinite.”

61. Williams writes somewhat more generally: “If Jenson’s trinitarian theology often acknowledges the Cappadocians with appreciation, it nonetheless follows a theological line that is unmistakably modern.” “The Parlement of Foules,” 190.

62. Jenson confirms in the later *Triune God* that he maintains “God’s eternity is temporal infinity” (218).

63. See, for example, Hegel, “Vorrede,” in *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, 18:18–21/“Preface” in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 10.

64. And, as stated in *Triune God*, 157: “Of course, we have already many times noted and said where in fact the Spirit stands: at the End of all God’s ways because he *is* the End of all God’s ways. The Spirit is the Liveliness of the divine life because he is the Power of the divine future.”

65. Though of course, as almost any theologian would want to argue, it would really also be very old.

66. Kärkkäinen mentions several of the thinkers whom I would include as ones mediating to Jenson various elements of Idealist thought: “He builds on his mentor Karl Barth, gleans significantly from Rahner and Pannenberg, and creatively echoes and expands themes from other recent developments in trinitarian theology such as the turn to history.” *Trinity: Global Perspectives*, 163.

67. Regrettably it has not been possible to do justice to Jenson’s overall view of theology in his volumes *Triune God* and *Triune Identity*, to the metaphysical implications of his trinitarian insights which he sketches out in brief but tantalizing remarks in these two volumes, and especially to his rich remarks on Jesus in relation to time and to the Trinity as such.

## Chapter 10

1. Catherine Mowry LaCugna, *The Theological Methodology of Hans Küng*, American Academy of Religion Academy Series, vol. 39 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1982). See further remarks on LaCugna and her career in Nancy A. Dallavalle, “In Memory of Catherine Mowry LaCugna (1952–97),” *Horizons* 24 (1997): 265–66.



2. Catherine Mowry LaCugna, *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), referred to as *God for Us* and usually cited in the text by page number. LaCugna opens the book as follows: "The doctrine of the Trinity is ultimately a practical doctrine with radical consequences for Christian life. That is the thesis of this book" (1). Among her many other studies on Trinity, we could note, by way of a here particularly relevant example, "Philosophers and Theologians on the Trinity," *Modern Theology* 2 (1986): 169–81. Among many studies of various aspects of LaCugna's trinitarian thought: Ted Peters, *GOD as Trinity: Relationality and Temporality in Divine Life* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), 122–28; Earl Muller, "The Science of Theology: A Review of Catherine LaCugna's *God for Us*," *Gregorianum* 75 (1994): 311–41; "Review Symposium, Four Perspectives," *Horizons* 20 (1997): Susan Wood, 127–29, who on 129 asks: "Even though you [LaCugna] begin with the economy, you still seem to be largely operating within the conceptual framework of a specific philosophical system"; Roger Haight, 129–32; Mary Ann Donovan, 132–33; Barbara A. Finan, 134–35; with "Author's Response," 135–42, where she responds to Wood's question concerning her having worked from a "specific philosophical system" rather than from the biblical witness by saying she is "averse to beginning with a specific philosophical system and applying it to biblical data" (136). She goes on to insist that what is pertinent is especially what is expressed in Scripture concerning God's relationship, with "relationship" as an appropriate category for working with biblically expressed religious experience (136); Mary Catharine Hilkert, "The Mystery of Persons in Communion: The Trinitarian Theology of Catherine Mowry LaCugna," *Word & World* 18 (1998): 237–43; Elizabeth T. Groppe, "Catherine Mowry LaCugna's Contribution to Trinitarian Theology," *Theological Studies* 63 (2002): 730–63; Stanley J. Grenz, *Rediscovering the Triune God: The Trinity in Contemporary Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2004), 147–62; Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *The Trinity: Global Perspectives* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007), 178–93; Patricia A. Fox, "Feminist Theologies and the Trinity," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Trinity*, ed. Peter C. Phan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 282–84, 286–87.

3. Italics here and in other quotes from this volume are in the original.

4. For LaCugna's careful consideration of selected aspects of the thought of the Cappadocians, see chap. 2, 53–79.

5. On Augustine see *God for Us*, chap. 2, 81–109.

6. *God for Us*, for example: 10, 44, 145, 150–52, 167, 215. For LaCugna's quite respectful treatment of Aquinas, see chap. 5, 143–80.

7. For LaCugna's in many ways sympathetic presentation of Gregory Palamas, see *God for Us*, chap. 6, 181–205.

8. However, LaCugna references Aloys Grillmeier, *Église et tradition* (Le Puy: X. Mappus, 1963), 118, in her first note regarding divine "self-revelation" and

“self-communication.” *God for Us*, 233n1. She refers explicitly to Rahner regarding divine self-communication on 212.

9. In *God for Us*, 233n2, LaCugna refers more generally to Karl Rahner, *The Trinity* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970) and to several of his other works.

10. Groppe, “Catherine Mowry LaCugna’s Contribution,” 732–41.

11. LaCugna’s reference at this point is especially to John D. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1985), 41–42, in *God for Us*, 245, with 306nn5 and 6.

12. LaCugna cites Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, 18.

13. LaCugna refers to Jürgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God* (New York: Harper and Row, 1981), 139–48.

14. LaCugna works with John Macmurray’s *Self as Agent* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957) and *Persons in Relation* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1961).

15. *God for Us*, 257 with 307–08n40.

16. LaCugna cites Macmurray, *Persons in Relation*, 174.

17. John D. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church*, Forward by John Meyendorff (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1985, 1993), 27–65.

18. For example, *God for Us*, 260–61.

19. Patricia Wilson-Kastner, *Faith, Feminism and the Christ* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983)126, cited by LaCugna in *God for Us*, 270.

20. Moltmann, *Trinity and the Kingdom*, 174–76, referred to in *God for Us*, 270.

21. Leonardo Boff, *Trinity and Society* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1988), 133–34, cited by LaCugna in *God for Us*, 276.

22. Of particular note is LaCugna’s later clearly affirming Trinity in terms of divine and human persons in communion: “The point of the doctrine of the Trinity is the *relationship and communion among persons, divine and human*, not their absolute distance from each other.” “Author’s Response,” *Horizons*, 139, and see 140.

23. For a critique of Hegel, with Augustine, as doing a “transcendental projection of humanity’s self-understanding,” see *God for Us*, 321.

24. Rahner, *The Trinity*, 22 (italics in the Rahnerian original and in LaCugna’s citation).

25. “There is only one God, one self-communication, one triune mystery of love and communion, which has both eternal and temporal modalities.” *God for Us*, 231, and see 320, 334. As well, “There is neither an economic nor an immanent Trinity; there is only the *oikonomia* that is the concrete realization of the mystery of *theologia* in time, space, history, and personality” (223 and see 6). See LaCugna’s further remarks in “Author’s Response,” *Horizons*, 139. Overall, when LaCugna works directly with her preferred notions of *theologia* and *oikonomia*, she tends to use a somewhat more flexible language to express the relation between these two as

compared with her language regarding “immanent” and “economic” Trinity. With regard to *theologia* and *oikonomia* she will typically speak of essential relationship (for example, *God for Us*, 293), essential unity of the two and “not collapsing the distinction between them” (for example, 319). Five years before *God for Us*, LaCugna had said that “after medieval theology the speculative tradition ran aground in two directions. On the one hand the speculation on God became indistinguishable from God as such (Hegel). On the other, speculative reason sundered the two histories of God, thinking that we could have knowledge only of the ‘economic trinity’ (Schleiermacher). Speculative idealism is incompatible with Christian trinitarianism for a number of reasons; either it fails adequately to distinguish between the eternal and temporal enactments of God’s history as God, or, it conflates them. *Deus in se* must be distinguished but not separated from *Deus pro nobis*.” “Philosophers and Theologians on the Trinity,” 180n24.

See further remarks on the relationship between *theologia* and *oikonomia* in: Groppe, “Catherine Mowry LaCugna’s Trinitarian Theology,” 742–47, 753–54; Grenz, *Rediscovering the Triune God*, 158–62, with abundant references to various concerns with and praise or critique of what he terms LaCugna’s corollary, namely, “her contention that *theologia* is *oikonomia* with its attendant rejection not only of the distinction between, but even of the language of, the immanent Trinity and the economic Trinity” (159); Kärkkäinen, *Trinity: Global Perspectives*, 179, 182, 187–93.

26. Dale M. Schlitt, *Hegel’s Trinitarian Claim: A Critical Reflection* (Leiden: Brill, 1984; Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2012), 18–19 (1984), 7 (2012).

27. Macmurray was certainly quite familiar with post-Kantian German Idealist thought, especially that of Hegel. In Macmurray’s Gifford Lectures, entitled “The Form of the Personal,” of 1952–53 and 1953–54, published respectively as *The Self as Agent* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957; London: Faber and Faber, 1957, 1969 [same pagination]) and *Persons in Relation* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1961; London: Faber and Faber, 1961, 1970 [same pagination]) we find remarks such as the following: already at the beginning of his first Gifford Lecture series, “The Self must be conceived not theoretically as subject, but practically, as agent. . . . The first [the point that the Self must be conceived not theoretically but practically] requires us to substitute for the Self as subject, which is the starting-point of modern philosophy, *The Self as Agent*.” *Self as Agent*, 38. This remark by Macmurray should be taken in conjunction with his further, though quite sparse, references concerning Hegel in the published Gifford Lectures concerning Hegel (see *Self as Agent*, 32, 34, 40, 52, 53).

On Macmurray more generally see: John E. Costello, *John Macmurray: A Biography* (Edinburgh: Floris Books, 2002), with an overview of the published Gifford Lectures 323–33; Alexander Broadie, *A History of Scottish Philosophy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009/2010), who treats Macmurray under the title “Aspects of Idealism,” 339, with biographical background on 351–52 and a survey, on 352–62, of aspects of his thought in the published Gifford Lectures.

James Allard speaks of post-Kantian German Idealism's rather commanding presence on the British philosophical scene beginning with Henry Longueville Mansel in this latter's *A Lecture on the Philosophy of Kant* (London: John Henry and James Parker, 1856), reprinted in Henry Longueville Mansel, *Letters, Lectures and Reviews* (London: John Murray, 1873), where he encourages the study especially of Schelling and Hegel, 181 (1873 text), and with James Hutchison Stirling, *The Secret of Hegel* (London: Longmans, 1865). "Idealism in Britain and the United States," in *The Cambridge History of Philosophy 1870–1945*, ed. Thomas Baldwin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 43–44. See also Jan Olof Bengtsson, *The Worldview of Personalism: Origins and Early Development* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), chap. 4, section entitled "British Personal Idealism," 240–70, where on 255, he discusses the thought of A. A. Pringle-Pattison, among others, and remarks: "Pringle-Pattison's formulations neatly sum up arguments that had been polemically set against impersonalism since the 1780s. For his positive alternative he employs, as did his predecessors, the resources of modern idealism, to which he adds those of more recent philosophies." And more specifically concerning Idealism as a major force in Scottish philosophy see Broadie, *History of Scottish Philosophy*, especially in chapters 10 and 11. See also David Boucher, introduction to *The Scottish Idealists: Selected Philosophical Writings*, ed. David Boucher (Exeter, UK: Imprint Academic, 2004), 1–22. On the important presence of German Idealist thought in Scotland, see the comprehensive article by David Fergusson, "Scottish Idealism," in *The Impact of Idealism: The Legacy of Post-Kantian German Thought*, ed. Nicholas Boyle and Liz Disley, vol. 1, *Philosophy and Natural Sciences*, ed. Karl Ameriks (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 272–98, where Fergusson underscores the importance of Hegel (280, 295) and makes regular reference not only to Idealism's impact on Scottish philosophy but also, through various philosophers and theologians, on religion and social ordering. He speaks as well of the influence of Scottish Idealism on philosophical thought in Australia (289–90). Of particular present interest, he colorfully refers to continuing twentieth-century Idealist impact in Scotland when he speaks of metaphysical Scotland, within the context of which he notes the work of more personalist Idealists and, in particular, John Macmurray (293–94).

28. On more general, recognizably Idealist elements in Macmurray's thought, see, for example: Stephen Cowley, "John Macmurray's Early Milieu," in "Hegelian News & Reviews," accessed December 6, 2013, <http://scottish-hegelian.blogspot.com/2012/07/john-macmurrays-early-milieu.html>; Stephen Cowley, "Hegel and John Macmurray on Personhood and Society," in "Hegelian News & Reviews," accessed December 8, 2013, <http://scottish-hegelian.blogspot.com/2012/09/john-macmurray-and-hegel.html>; Mark Bevir and D. O'Brien, "From Idealism to Communitarianism: The Inheritance and Legacy of John Macmurray," *History of Political Thought* 24 (2003): 305–29; Costello, *John Macmurray: A Biography*, especially in chapter 7, "Discovering the Personal (1925–1928)," the part entitled

“Exploring the German Romantics,” 130–37, where Costello discusses Macmurray’s reading, among others, of Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel. There Costello notes that Macmurray studied mechanical and organic conceptions of unity, critiquing both as inadequate to the human reality. According to Costello, for Macmurray “the organic conception . . . produced the need for a *dialectical* logic, the expression of which reached its greatest refinement in Hegel’s thought. It forced him [Macmurray] to acknowledge that whatever way an advance might be made towards a philosophy of the distinctively human, it would necessarily have to be a logic that included, in some manner, the gains made by the two earlier modes of thought” (132). Costello makes further remarks concerning Macmurray in relation to Hegel on, for example, 101, 125, 130, 138, 145. In “Idealism against Religion,” (booklet) (London: The Lindsey Press, 1944), Macmurray reflected what would indicate a more negative impact of Idealism on his thought. As Michael Edwards puts it, without referring to a specific Idealist thinker, “Macmurray defined Idealism, both in its popular and philosophical forms, as an emotional attachment to ideas rather than to things. “Idealism against Religion: A Summary,” in “John Macmurray: The John Macmurray Fellowship Website,” accessed December 12, 2013, <http://john-macmurray.org/reviews/idealism-against-religion/>. The references here to Macmurray in relation to the post-Kantian German Idealists are not, of course, meant to indicate that Macmurray was not as well variously influenced by a wide range of thinkers including, notably, Kant and his stress on the practical.

29. On Hegel’s dynamic presentation of dialectically developing subjectivity, see Schlitt, *Hegel’s Trinitarian Claim*, 1–28 (1984), 3–14 (2012).

30. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, ed. Allen W. Wood, trans. H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991). This English “translation is based on the text of the first edition of the *Rechtsphilosophie* (1820), as reproduced in Volume VII of Hegel’s *Werke*, edited by Eva Moldenhauer and Karl Markus Michel and published by the Suhrkamp Verlag (Frankfurt am Main, 1970). I [Nisbet] have compared the text throughout with the variorum edition of the work in Volume II of Karl-Heinz Ilting’s edition of Hegel’s *Vorlesungen über Rechtsphilosophie 1818–1831* . . . whose readings I have at times adopted in preference to those of the Suhrkamp edition.” H. B. Nisbet, translator’s preface to *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, xxxv. The critical edition of the 1821 text can be found in Hegel’s *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 14 (in three vols.), *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, ed. Klaus Grotzsch and Elisabeth Weisser-Lohmann (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 2007).

31. On Hegel’s concept of person in the *Philosophy of Right*, see, for example, §§ 34–40, 186–87, 190 remark. In looking forward to his further development of the notion of “person,” and this in particular relationship to the question of property, Hegel remarks, “Die Person sich von sich unterscheidend verhält sich zu einer andern Person.” *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, § 40/“A person, in

distinguishing himself from himself, relates himself to *another person*.” *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, § 40.

For further remarks on Hegel’s concept of person in the *Philosophy of Right*, in addition to works cited immediately below in n. 32, see here and there throughout the following: Allen W. Wood, *Hegel’s Ethical Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Paul Franco, *Hegel’s Philosophy of Freedom* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999); Frederick Neuhouser, *Foundations of Hegel’s Social Theory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000).

32. See, for example, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, §§ 105, 113, 114. On Hegel on person in relation to action, see: Dudley Knowles, *Hegel and the Philosophy of Right* (London: Routledge 2002), 165–90; Michael Quante, *Hegel’s Concept of Action*, trans. Dean Moyer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); David Rose, *Hegel’s Philosophy of Right: A Reader’s Guide* (New York: Continuum, 2007), 78–84.

33. *Self as Agent*, 127–28. See Costello, *John Macmurray: A Biography*, 325–26.

34. *Self as Agent*, 327.

35. Though it is perhaps harder to establish any direct or perhaps even indirect connection between Macmurray and Schelling on the notion of person as relational and as agent, it might be helpful to recall that Schelling himself had envisioned the development of the divine potencies into divine Persons through the interaction of the second and third potency giving rise to the full personhood of Spirit, Son, and Father.

36. Broadie, *History of Scottish Philosophy*, 339.

37. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, chapter 1, “Personhood and Being,” 27–65, esp. 15, 43–63.

38. John D. Zizioulas, “Human Capacity and Human Incapacity,” *The Scottish Journal of Theology* 28 (1975): 401–48.

39. In *Trinitarian Theology Today: Essays on Divine Being and Act*, ed. Christoph Schwöbel (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1995), 44–60.

40. Zizioulas, “The Doctrine of the Holy Trinity,” 58.

41. Zizioulas, “The Doctrine of the Holy Trinity,” 52.

42. Lucian Turcescu, “‘Person’ versus ‘Individual,’ and Other Modern Misreadings of Gregory of Nyssa,” *Modern Theology* 18 (2002): 527–39. For a response to Lucian Turcescu’s critique of Zizioulas, see Aristotle Papanikolaou, “Is John Zizioulas an Existentialist in Disguise? Response to Lucian Turcescu,” *Modern Theology* 20 (2004): 601–07. Papanikolaou says that Turcescu does not successfully argue his critique of Zizioulas’s reading of the Cappadocians on “person” as relational being. Papanikolaou does, however, remark that “though Turcescu may, in the end, be correct that a relational ontology of trinitarian personhood does not exist in the Cappadocian Fathers, this particular article does not by itself discredit Zizioulas’s interpretation” (602). He goes on to say that Zizioulas has himself admitted to being

influenced by modern personalism and names J. Maritain, E. Mounier, M. Buber, G. Marcel, as well as the existentialism of S. Kierkegaard as those by whom Zizioulas has been influenced (604). Papanikolaou cites Zizioulas's article, "The Being of God and the Being of Anthropos" (in Greek), *SYNAXIS* 37 (1991): 11–35, esp. 15–19.

Turcescu has published his own reading of Gregory of Nyssa on Divine Persons in *Gregory of Nyssa and the Concept of Divine Persons* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), with a succinct summary of that reading on 116–17. This study is based on his PhD dissertation, "The Concept of Divine Persons in St. Gregory of Nyssa's Works," University of St. Michael's College, Toronto, 1999.

On Zizioulas's personalist thought see, among many studies, Basilio Petrà, "Personalist Thought in Greece in the Twentieth Century: A First Tentative Synthesis," trans. Norman Russell, *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 50 (2004): 1–48, on Zizioulas 26–33 plus important notes on 43–48, including references to hesitations concerning Zizioulas's personalist thought in nn. 112–17, accessed January 26, 2014, <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=53&sid=4ae0bc8fa788-4299-ade0ec8becacc%40sessionmgr4005&hid=4209>. Petrà stresses the influence of Émigré Russian Thought on the development of personalist thought in Greece since 1960 (13), including that of Zizioulas.

43. Turcescu, " 'Person' versus 'Individual,'" for example, 530 with 533, 534, and 537.

44. Turcescu, " 'Person' versus 'Individual,'" 534.

45. James L. Fredericks, "Primordial Vow: Reflections on the Holy Trinity in Light of Dialogue with Pure Land Buddhism," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Trinity*, ed. Peter C. Phan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 326–27, citing Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100–600)* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), 220–23. Pelikan writes: "Significantly, the defense of the dogma of the Trinity did not rely primarily on this metaphysical identification [the identification of the divine *ousia* as a universal]. Even Gregory of Nyssa, philosophically the most brilliant and bold of the three Cappadocians, stopped short of providing a speculative solution for the relation of the One and the Three or of the distinction between the properties of the One and those of the Three" (222).

46. Sarah Coakley, "Chapter 7: 'Persons' in the 'Social' Doctrine of the Trinity: Current Analytic Discussion and 'Cappadocian' Theology," in *Powers and Submissions: Spirituality, Philosophy and Gender* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), 109–29, a lightly revised version of the text first published in *The Trinity: An Interdisciplinary Symposium on the Doctrine of the Trinity*, ed. Stephen T. Davis, Daniel Kendall, S.J., and Gerald O'Collins, S.J. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 123–44. Coakley questions the reading of Gregory of Nyssa on person by, for example, David Brown and cites the following works by him: "Trinitarian Personhood and Individuality," in *Trinity, Incarnation, and Atonement: Philosophical and Theological Essays*, ed. Ronald J. Feenstra and Cornelius Plantinga (Notre Dame, IN: Notre

Dame University Press, 1989), 48–78; *The Divine Trinity* (London: Gerald Duckworth, 1985), with Brown discussing the notion of “person” and Gregory of Nyssa on, for example, 285–87; “Trinity,” in *A Companion to Philosophy of Religion*, ed. Philip I. Quinn and Charles Taliaferro (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), 525–31.

Among others who have expressed hesitations concerning Zizioulas’s interpretation of the Cappadocians on the notion of person, see Najeeb G. Awad “Personhood as Particularity: John Zizioulas, Colin Gunton, and the Trinitarian Theology of Personhood,” *Journal of Reformed Theology* 4 (2010): 1–22, on Zizioulas 3–15.

47. Coakley, “‘Persons’ in the ‘Social’ Doctrine of the Trinity,” 110.

48. Coakley, “‘Persons’ in the ‘Social’ Doctrine of the Trinity,” 112.

49. Coakley, “‘Persons’ in the ‘Social’ Doctrine of the Trinity,” 117–24.

50. Coakley, “‘Persons’ in the ‘Social’ Doctrine of the Trinity,” 118, emphasis in the original.

51. Coakley, “‘Persons’ in the ‘Social’ Doctrine of the Trinity,” 119–20.

52. Coakley, “‘Persons’ in the ‘Social’ Doctrine of the Trinity,” 125–26.

53. Coakley, “‘Persons’ in the ‘Social’ Doctrine of the Trinity,” 123. And she concludes: “A *reduction* of ‘person’ to ‘relationality’ is not what he [Gregory of Nyssa] intends” (129), emphasis in the original texts. The Cappadocians, and especially Basil of Caesarea, were involved in controversy with those who denied the full divinity of the Holy Spirit. Basil spends a great deal of time and energy discussing a wide variety of roles and functions of the Holy Spirit in his effort to argue to its equality in divinity and honor with Father and Son. In light of discussions as to the understanding of person in Cappadocian thought, it would perhaps be interesting to re-read Basil’s *On the Holy Spirit* to see whether it would provide any further insight into that understanding.

Several studies by Coakley and Turcescu as well as Zizioulas have been referenced with regard to Zizioulas’s reading of the Cappadocians on person. One might say the discussion concerning this reading continues, at least indirectly, as witnessed to by studies such as the following: John D. Zizioulas, *Communion and Otherness: Further Studies in Personhood and the Church* (London: T & T Clark, 2006); John D. Zizioulas, “Relational Ontology: Insights from Patristic Thought,” in *The Trinity and an Entangled World: Relationality in Physical Science and Theology*, ed. John Polkinghorne (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010), 146–56; Sarah Coakley, ed. *Re-thinking Gregory of Nyssa* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 2002); Sarah Coakley, “Afterword: ‘Relational Ontology,’ Trinity, and Science,” in *The Trinity and an Entangled World*, 184–99, with explicit reference to Zizioulas especially on 188–91 and reference in 189–90n16 to several further relevant discussions in her edited volume, *Re-thinking Gregory of Nyssa*, by herself (chapter 1), Lewis Ayres (chapter 2), and Lucian Turcescu (chapter 7).

54. Coakley, “‘Persons’ in the ‘Social’ Doctrine of the Trinity,” 110, 111, 115, 116; Turcescu, “‘Person’ versus ‘Individual,’” 528, 530, 534, 535.



55. Generally stated, Fredericks, “Primordial Vow,” 327, see 337, 341.

56. Turcescu cites Zizioulas’s references to John Macmurray’s *Persons in Relation* and *Self as Agent* as well as Martin Buber’s *I and Thou*, in Zizioulas, “Human Capacity and Human Incapacity,” 408, as well as Zizioulas’s reference to Buber in *Being as Communion*, 17. “‘Person’ versus ‘Individual’” (in *Modern Theology*), 539n51, with references on 539n45 by Turcescu to Zizioulas’s further references to Buber.

57. Turcescu, “‘Person’ versus ‘Individual’” (in *Modern Theology*) 535–36. Charles D. Raith, II, follows in many ways a critique similar to that of Turcescu concerning Zizioulas’s reading of the Cappadocians, but he does so in critiquing more directly LaCugna’s own interpretation of the Cappadocian’s on Trinity. He in effect criticizes LaCugna’s “nominalist” reading of the Cappadocians when she stresses the priority of person or *hypostasis* over *ousia* as not reflecting what the Cappadocians held, thus for Raith making her appeal to the Cappadocians in support of her own position unacceptable. “Resourcing the Fathers? A Critical Analysis of Catherine Mowry LaCugna’s Appropriation of the Trinitarian Theology of the Cappadocian Fathers,” *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 10 (2008): 267–84, where in addition to his own references directly to Church Fathers he refers to Turcescu and others, including Sarah Coakley (276n51), on 269n10, 274n37, 277–78n61, with reference to Turcescu, *Gregory of Nyssa and the Concept of Divine Persons*, 269n10. He speaks on 271, 279, 281, and 283 of LaCugna’s nominalism.

58. Regarding Hegel and Buber and the question of similarities in their thought, see, by way of entry, Stephen Hudson, “Intersubjectivity of Mutual Recognition and the I–Thou: A Comparative Analysis of Hegel and Buber,” *Minerva: An Internet Journal of Philosophy* 14 (2010): 140–55, accessed December 29, 2013, <http://www.minerva.mic.ul.ie/vol14/intersubjectivity.pdf>.

59. Torrance, “Mapping Modern Concepts of the Person onto the Greek Patristic Past,” 1, 9, with references on 9n26 indicating articles challenging patristic sources as being “key to true relational ontology. The vocabulary simply isn’t consistent, even if the concepts in question can arguably be discerned” (9), accessed November 24, 2013, <http://dataspace.princeton.edu/jspui/bitstream/88435/dsp-010c483j425/1/Mapping%20Modern%20Concepts%20of%20the%20Person%20onto%20the%20Greek%20Patristic%20Past.pdf>, 1.

60. Torrance, “Mapping Modern Concepts of the Person,” 1–4. For a brief but most helpful reference to Mounier within the overall context of the development of personalism, see Thomas D. Williams and Jan Olof Bengtsson, “Personalism,” in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2013 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, accessed December 30, 2013, <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2013/entries/personalism/>. While Mounier of course reacted strongly against Hegel’s thought as he understood that thought, it would be of interest to see whether or not he might have been influenced, at least indirectly, by Schelling, whether through the

thought, for example, of Kierkegaard or of Solovyov, the latter perhaps through subsequent Russian thinkers.

61. On Florovsky and his shifting relationship to Solovyov and German Idealism, see Paul L. Gavriluk, *Georges Florovsky and the Russian Religious Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), for example, 206–09, 159–62.

62. Torrance, “Mapping Modern Concepts of the Person,” 4.

63. Turcescu, “‘Person’ versus ‘Individual’ ” (in *Modern Theology*), 528.

64. For a brief presentation of key elements of Hans-Georg Gadamer’s hermeneutical theory, see *Truth and Method*, 2nd rev. ed., trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall (New York: Crossroad, 1990, 1995), 300–07.

65. It might be helpful to recall that, in a somewhat similar situation, Zizioulas saw in Athanasius someone who at least implicitly, to use Zizioulas’s word as in the English translation, in effect brought about a new ontological understanding of being as relational and as communion. See the French and English texts cited in chapter 8, n. 17 above.

66. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode: Grundzüge einer philosophischen Hermeneutik* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1965), 284, 285/*Truth and Method*, 300, 301, with examples of German terms and English translations. Of course, even Gadamer himself seems to root his notion of horizon, as a form of flexible limit, in Hegel’s notion of limit. See, for example, *Truth and Method*, 343. It is important to recall again as well the rich variety of thinkers with which Zizioulas interacts either explicitly or implicitly in addition to those here indicated as mediating to him in various ways post-Kantian German Idealist insights into the notion of person. For a recent rather positive reading of Gadamer, at a wider level of hermeneutics, in relation to Hegel, see Nicholas Boyle, “Biblical Hermeneutics: From Kant to Gadamer,” in *The Impact of Idealism: The Legacy of Post-Kantian German Thought*, ed. Nicholas Boyle and Liz Disley, vol. 4: *Religion*, ed. Nicholas Adams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 134–39.

We should note that others have tried to insulate Zizioulas from too close a connection with post-Kantian German Idealism. For example, Paul M. Collins writes: “Zizioulas does not set out to combine the Cappadocian tradition with that of Augustine and Hegel. Any appeal which Zizioulas makes to the notion of self-realization is in relation to each particular divine person, not to a simple Absolute Subject.” *Trinitarian Theology, West and East: Karl Barth, the Cappadocian Fathers, and John Zizioulas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2001), 194. But it is just such notions as self-realization which have a certain rootage in German Idealist thought, whether self-realization would be considered in relation to a singly personal triune God or, as Schelling had done, in relation to each divine person.

67. In “On the Criticism of *Being as Communion* in Anglophone Orthodox Theology,” in *The Theology of John Zizioulas: Personhood and the Church*, ed. Douglas H. Knight (Aldershot, Hampshire, England: Ashgate, 2007), 35–78, Alan Brown

has mounted a forcefully stated, sweeping critique of a number of individuals and their criticism of the thought of John Zizioulas. Of particular interest here, he argues (35n2) against the positions especially of John Behr in *The Way to Nicea* (Crestwood, NY: SVS, 2001); John Behr, *The Nicene Faith* (Crestwood, NY: SVS, 2004); Lucian Turcescu, “‘Person’ versus ‘Individual’ and other Modern Misreadings of Gregory of Nyssa,” in *Re-thinking Gregory of Nyssa*, ed. Sarah Coakley (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), 97–109; Andrew Louth, *John Damascene: Tradition and Originality in Byzantine Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). To these should be added Sarah Coakley, “‘Persons’ in the ‘Social’ Doctrine of the Trinity: A Critique of Analytic Discussion,” in *The Trinity: An Interdisciplinary Symposium on the Trinity*, ed. Steven T. Davis, Daniel Kendall and Gerald O’Collins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 123–44. Of particular interest are his summary of several objections to Zizioulas’s reading of “Anti-personalist and Anti-existentialist Objections” (43–45) and his “Refutation of the Patristicist Objections” related to “Personalism and Existentialism” (see esp. 66–68). To put it very broadly, Brown responds to objections to Zizioulas’s reading of person and relation in the Cappadocians by emphasizing that Zizioulas is working not so much with specific words as used by them but, rather, with their fundamentally revised view of ontology. Brown writes, for example: “It is no part of Zizioulas’ programme to show that the meanings *the Cappadocians* gave to these words are absolutely isomorphic to the meanings *he* [Zizioulas] gives to these words. . . . It is no refutation of Zizioulas’ ontology to point out that he accords different meanings to the words ὑπόστασις and/or πρόσωπον than does a particular Father” (67). For a recent, positive reading of Zizioulas on person as relation in Gregory of Nyssa, a reading based in Zizioulas’s stress upon the Father who, as Person, is the origin of Son and Spirit, see Giulio Maspero, “Patristic Trinitarian Ontology,” in *Rethinking Trinitarian Theology: Disputed Questions and Contemporary Issues in Trinitarian Theology*, ed. Giulio Maspero and Robert J. Woźniak (New York: T & T Clark, 2012), 211–24.

## Chapter 11

1. Marc A. Pugliese, introduction to *Seeking Common Ground: Evaluation and Critique of Joseph Bracken’s Comprehensive Worldview*, ed. Marc A. Pugliese and Gloria L. Schaab, S.S.J. (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2012), 7 and see 10, 15. Introductory material is drawn from this introduction as well as a curriculum vitae accessed January 30, 2014, [http://www.xavier.edu/\\_application/media/faculty/Bracken%202010.pdf](http://www.xavier.edu/_application/media/faculty/Bracken%202010.pdf).

2. See similar remarks in Marc A. Pugliese, *The One, the Many, and the Trinity: Joseph A. Bracken and the Challenge of Process Metaphysics* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2011), xv, 67, 246.

3. Joseph A. Bracken, *Freiheit und Kausalität bei Schelling* (Freiburg: Karl Albert, 1972). On Schelling, Bracken has also published: "Freedom and Causality in the Philosophy of Schelling," *New Scholasticism* 50 (1976): 164–82; "Schelling's Positive Philosophy," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 15 (1977): 324–30.

4. Pugliese, *The One, the Many, and the Trinity*, xv.

5. Brandon Gallaher, "The Problem of Pantheism in the Sophiology of Sergii Bulgakove: A Panentheistic Solution in the Process Trinitarianism of Joseph A. Bracken," in *Seeking Common Ground: Evaluation and Critique of Joseph Bracken's Comprehensive Worldview*, ed. Marc A. Pugliese and Gloria L. Schaab, S.S.J. (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2012), 147.

6. Joseph A. Bracken, "The Holy Trinity as a Community of Divine Persons I, II," *Heythrop Journal* 15 (1974): 166–82, 257–70, with the quotation on 168.

7. For Bracken's impressive list of scholarly works, see Pugliese, *The One, the Many, and the Trinity*, 251–58.

8. Joseph A. Bracken, *What Are They Saying about the Trinity?* (New York: Paulist, 1979).

9. Bracken, *What Are They Saying*, 80–83.

10. Joseph A. Bracken, *The Triune Symbol: Persons, Process and Community*, College Theology Society Studies in Religion, 1 (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1985), vii.

11. Joseph A. Bracken, *The Divine Matrix: Creativity as Link between East and West* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1995). See the thoughtful reflection on Bracken's work in the area of interreligious philosophical theology by Leo D. Lefebure, "The Infinite Ground & the Triune God in Interreligious Perspective: The Contribution of Joseph Bracken," in *Seeking Common Ground: Evaluation and Critique of Joseph Bracken's Comprehensive Worldview*, ed. Marc A. Pugliese and Gloria L. Schaab, S.S.J. (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2012), 235–51, with Bracken's response, "Response to Contributors," 263.

12. Joseph A. Bracken, *Curriculum vitae*, accessed January 30, 2014, [http://www.xavier.edu/\\_application/media/faculty/Bracken%202010.pdf](http://www.xavier.edu/_application/media/faculty/Bracken%202010.pdf).

13. Joseph A. Bracken, *The One in the Many: A Contemporary Reconstruction of the God-World Relationship* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2001), 10.

14. Joseph A. Bracken, *Christianity and Process Thought: Spirituality for a Changing World* (Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation, 2006), with the description here noted in the present text coming from the back cover of the volume.

15. Bracken, *Christianity and Process Thought*, xvi.

16. Joseph A. Bracken, *Society and Spirit: A Trinitarian Cosmology* (London: Associated University Presses, 1991), hereafter referred to as *Society and Spirit* and usually cited in the text by page number.

17. Bracken, *Triune Symbol*, 189, and *Society and Spirit*, 172n33.

18. For a more comprehensive, synthesizing presentation of Bracken's philosophical process theology, see Pugliese, *The One, the Many, and the Trinity*, 68–159, with special reference to Trinity on 123–59. Pugliese refers, quite fully throughout Bracken's *corpus*, to various themes to which Bracken attends and ideas which he develops over the course of his career. In this way he is in effect documenting a fundamental continuity in Bracken's thought.

19. Bracken works directly with Whitehead's technical terminology. For present purposes we will simply follow his lead, while occasionally noting his own brief descriptions, in *The One in the Many*, 218–21, of what Whitehead meant by specific terms. Here, for example, Bracken refers to "actual occasion" which he notes is "another term for an *actual entity*." He in turn describes an actual entity as "a submicroscopic subject of experience which exists only for an instant but in that interval makes a self-constituting *decision* as to what it is to be" (218).

20. See, for example, Bracken's summary of what he is saying in the introduction in *Society and Spirit*, 22.

21. Bracken, *The One in the Many*, 221.

22. Ivor Leclerc, *The Philosophy of Nature* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1986); *The Nature of Physical Existence* (New York: Humanities Press, 1972). In *Society and Spirit* Bracken discusses Leclerc's thought especially on 39–49.

23. "*Causal Efficacy*: In Whitehead's philosophy, the more primitive and fundamental mode of perception in which data from past actual occasions are transmitted on a feeling-level to a *concreting actual occasion* in a massive but nevertheless vague and inarticulate manner." Bracken, *The One in the Many*, 218. In quotations from Bracken italics are as in his texts.

24. Ervin Laszlo, *Introduction to Systems Philosophy* (New York: Gordon & Breach, 1972).

25. Edward Pols, *Meditation on a Prisoner: Towards Understanding Action and Mind* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1975).

26. Bracken also holds that his modified version of a Whiteheadian society, with its further developed understanding of a society's formal causality, corresponds better, in his reading, to Whitehead's various remarks on society than do those of Charles Hartshorne and John B. Cobb, who do not go as far as Bracken in attributing such further causality to a society. *Spirit and Society*, 56.

27. Bracken further states: "I have argued throughout this book . . . that Whiteheadian societies are functioning ontological unities in their own right" (173n24).

28. See also *Society and Spirit*, 14, with regard to Schelling, 91, and concerning Hegel, especially 105–06.

29. Martin Heidegger, *Schellings Abhandlung über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit*, ed. Hildegaard Feick (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1971).

30. Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling, "Philosophische Untersuchungen über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit und die zusammenhängende Gegenstände," in *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. K. F. A. Schelling, vol. 7, 1805–1810 (Stuttgart: J. G. Cotta'ser Verlag, 1860), 336–416. For Bracken's own analysis of the *Freiheitsschrift*, see *Freiheit und Kausalität*, 36–66, with a helpful summary of what he calls Schelling's "thought model" (*Denkmodell*) on 17–18 and four conclusions on 121–22, in the last of which he clarifies that divine or human action (*Handlung*) must necessarily arise out of ground (*Grund*). But as an act (*Tat*) it must be independent of ground in order for it to be free. See his conclusions at the end of his analysis of the *Freiheitsschrift*, on 65–66.

31. Wolfgang Wieland, *Schellings Lehre von der Zeit* (Heidelberg: Winter Verlag, 1956). Bracken refers to Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling, *Die Weltalter. Fragmente*, ed. Manfred Schröter (Munich: Biederstein & Leibniz, 1946).

32. Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Anthropology in Theological Perspective*, trans. Matthew O'Connell (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1985).

33. Prof. Bracken has recently worked with the notion of open-ended system in order to express what a Whiteheadian society, and thus a field of activity, is. See Joseph A. Bracken, *Does God Roll Dice? Divine Providence for a World in the Making* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2012), 75–89, 111–24. See also his study, "Whiteheadian Structured Societies as Open-Ended Systems and Open-Ended Systems as Whiteheadian Structured Societies," in *Metaphysics*, ed. Mark Pestana (InTech, 2012, ISBN 978-953-51-0646-3), 111–26, esp. 122, accessed March 13, 2014, <http://www.intechopen.com/books/metaphysics/whiteheadian-structured-societies-as-open-ended-systems-and-open-ended-systems-as-whiteheadian-s>.

34. See, for example, in Bracken, *Triune Symbol*, 20–24.

35. Bracken describes the Whiteheadian notion of the primordial nature of God as "the ordered relevance of all *eternal objects* to one another as grasped by God . . . in a comprehensive vision and progressively employed by God . . . in guiding the world of creation in its ongoing development." The consequent nature of God is "God's *prehension* of everything that has happened thus far within the cosmic process." Creativity is "the ultimate principle of existence and activity both for the self-constitution of *actual occasions* . . . and for the co-constitution of the various *societies* to which they belong." Eternal objects are "objective possibilities of existence and activity for *actual entities* which are to be found in their fullness (as conceptually ordered to one another) within the *primordial nature* of God and in a more limited though concrete way within the world of past *actual entities*." Bracken, *The One in the Many*, 218–20.

36. David Griffin, "The Possibility of Subjective Immortality in Whitehead's Philosophy," *The Modern Schoolman* 53 (1975–76): 39–57; Marjorie Suchocki, *The End of Evil: Process Eschatology in Historical Context* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1988).

37. See *Society and Spirit*, 154–59, where Bracken discusses these two thinkers who seemed to show this difficulty: Bernard Meland, *Fallible Forms and Symbols: Discourses on Method in a Theology of Culture* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976); Bernard M. Loomer, “The Size of God,” in *The Size of God: The Theology of Bernard Loomer in Context*, ed. William Dean and Larry E. Axel (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1987), 20–51.

38. See all of chapter 5 in *Society and Spirit*.

39. On Bracken’s working with the notion of field in physics, see Marc A. Pugliese, “Orthodoxy or Orthopraxy? Recent Developments in Physics and Joseph A. Bracken as Revisionist Whiteheadian,” in *Seeking Common Ground*, 97–116.

40. For example, *Society and Spirit*, 44 and 42. Bracken further discusses Schelling on ground, especially in Schelling’s 1809 *Freiheitsschrift*, in *Divine Matrix*, 45–51, 66–67.

41. Regarding the German terms, see, for example, *Society and Spirit*, 97, 174n19; Bracken, *Freiheit und Kausalität*, 62.

42. Bracken, *Freiheit und Kausalität*, 121–22. According to Bracken, Schelling thought of “ground” in relation to both divine and human consciousness and to its consequence in history. The factuality (*Faktizität*) of free action was, however, independent of this ground. On Schelling’s relating of principles of unity and differentiation with will rather than with mind from 1809 on, see briefly *Society and Spirit*, 28. We should note Bracken himself argues that Schelling was not finally successful in his attempt to maintain the autonomy of free action while at the same time trying to provide that free action with a more systematic, rational explanation (*Erklärung*). Bracken sees this as an unresolved tension arising in Schelling’s work from 1809 on through to and including the negative and positive philosophy of the later Schelling. *Freiheit und Kausalität*, 55, 65–66, 76–77, 81, 84, 89, 90, 119–20, and 122 where Bracken provides an example of the relationship between ground and consequent when he speaks of the later negative philosophy as ground and the positive philosophy as consequent, with the latter following from the former, and yet ultimately including the former, and with the two being related through a free divine act, namely, that of creation. See also Bracken, “Freedom and Causality in the Philosophy of Schelling,” 182n27; Bracken, “Schelling’s Positive Philosophy,” 328–30.

43. “Properly understood” implies recognizing that a society as field arises out of the concrescence of its constituent actual occasions while providing them with a common element of form. On the common element of form, see *Society and Spirit*, 64–65, 70 and *passim*. Properly understood also in light of the society-as-field’s many characteristics and functions. By way of example, among these characteristics and functions we could mention its enduring character (69–70), its serving as principle of continuity (62), its having ontological actuality (65), its being self-sustaining and possessing an objective unity (110), its corporate agency (117–18), and its being a functioning ontological totality (118). More recently Bracken has clearly identified

the causality attributable to actual occasions as efficient causality and that exercised by society/field as formal causality. "Response to Contributors," in *Seeking Common Ground*, 262.

44. Antoon Braeckman, "Whitehead and German Idealism: A Poetic Heritage. *Process Studies* 14 (1984–85): 265–86. Prof. Bracken's citing this article brought it to my attention. Bracken notes Braeckman "argues that for both Schelling and Whitehead the ultimate ground of Being is not an entity, but rather an underlying ontological activity" (*Society and Spirit*, 175n34, referencing pp. 278–79 in Braeckman's article). See also further reflection on the thought of Whitehead and that of Schelling in Philip Clayton, "Pluralism, Idealism, Romanticism: Untapped Resources for a Trinity in Process," in *Theology as Process: A Relational Theology of God*, ed. Joseph A. Bracken and Marjorie Hewitt Suchocki (New York: Continuum, 1997), 118–45, esp. on Whitehead and Schelling 128–36 with constructive reflection on Schelling's thought. See at greater length the studies comparing the thought of Whitehead and Hegel in: *Hegel and Whitehead: Contemporary Perspectives on Systematic Philosophy*, ed. George R. Lucas, Jr. (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1986); *Whitehead und der deutsche Idealismus*, ed. George R. Lucas, Jr., and Antoon Braeckman (Bern: Peter Lang, 1990). A further avenue by which to examine possible Idealist influences on Whitehead's thought would be, among others, to follow up on Whitehead's remark that he is "greatly indebted to Bergson, William James, and John Dewey." Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality: An Essay in Cosmology*, corrected edition, ed. David Ray Griffin and Donald W. Sherburne (New York: The Free Press, 1978), xii. For a helpful wider presentation of antecedents of Whitehead, including various forms of Idealism, see Pugliese, *The One, the Many, and the Trinity*, 8–22.

45. Braeckman, "Whitehead and German Idealism," 265–66, where he quotes Whitehead's own evaluation of his knowledge of Hegel in Whitehead's *Essays in Science and Philosophy* (New York: Greenwood, 1969), 116. For a reading of Whitehead's thought as exhibiting particular similarities to that of Hegel, with reference to further literature on the question, see Robert Ellis, "From Hegel to Whitehead," *The Journal of Religion* 61 (1981): 403–21, with brief reference to a possible trinitarian reading of Whitehead on 419–20.

46. Braeckman, "Whitehead and German Idealism," 274–76.

47. Braeckman, "Whitehead and German Idealism," 274.

48. Braeckman makes these comparisons in rather intertwined fashion in "Whitehead and German Idealism," 274–82.

49. Braeckman, "Whitehead and German Idealism," 282.

50. On antecedents to Bracken's thought, those with whom he enters into conversation, sources of his thought, and his working with them, see Pugliese, *The One, the Many, and the Trinity*, xv, 68, 69, with reference, throughout 71–159, 246, to many of these thinkers with whom Bracken enters into discussion. For the record, we should note that in addition to Hegel and Schelling, Bracken dialogues



at length with, among many others, such greats as Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, Heidegger, and Hartshorne.

51. Pugliese, *The One, the Many, and the Trinity*, 76. More generally, Pugliese reflects on Bracken in relation to Schelling on 72–76, 116.

52. Pugliese, *The One, the Many, and the Trinity*, 81–82n62. More generally, Pugliese reflects on Bracken in relation to Hegel on 81–82, 90, and 91.

## Chapter 12

1. When we speak of the Christian experience of God as Trinity and its affirmation we easily think, in these regards, of various forms of trinitarian spirituality as so many points of reference to which we might call attention. Among them, by way of brief example, we could note indications of lived experience of the Trinity witnessed to by various New Testament assertions, Basil of Caesarea's writing on the Holy Spirit, Andrei Rublev's icon of the Trinity, Marie of the Incarnation's recounting of her experiences of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, certain aspects of late Romanesque and early Gothic cathedral structures, Charles Wesley's numerous hymns to the Trinity, Leonardo Boff's trinitarian theology of liberation, and constructive reflections on creation's "groaning" for trinitarian fulfillment.

2. Dale M. Schlitt, *Hegel's Trinitarian Claim: A Critical Reflection* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1984).

3. Dale M. Schlitt, *Hegel's Trinitarian Claim: A Critical Reflection* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2012).

4. Schlitt, *Hegel's Trinitarian Claim*, 7 (1984); xxiii and see x (2012).

5. Dale M. Schlitt, *Experience and Spirit: A Post-Hegelian Philosophical Theology* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007). Usually cited in the text by page number and referred to in notes as *Experience*.

6. *Experience*, on Gadamer 73–75, on initial proposals 75–83.

7. On Gadamer's philosophical journey, as he puts it, one could well note in addition to Gadamer's many writings on Hegel and Heidegger, Gadamer's "Reflections on My Philosophical Journey," in *The Philosophy of Hans-Georg Gadamer*, ed. Lewis Hahn (Chicago: Open Court, 1997), 3–63. In addition of course to Plato, Gadamer refers in this study to Heidegger throughout, and to Hegel especially on 32–48. In a similar personal vein, see also Hans-Georg Gadamer in Conversation with Riccardo Dottori, *A Century of Philosophy*, trans. Rod Coltman with Sigrid Koepeke (New York: Continuum, 2004), where, for example, on 75–79 Gadamer speaks of Hegel, Schelling, and Heidegger. Among so many studies by Gadamer, one would be remiss if one did not mention his quasi-meditative reflection in "Hegel and Heidegger," in Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Hegel's Dialectic: Five Hermeneutical Studies*, trans. P. Christopher Smith (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1976), 100–16.

Along the trajectory from Hegel to Gadamer *via* Heidegger who so strongly influenced Gadamer, it is fascinating to follow Heidegger's own move from Hegel on consciousness and thought to Heidegger's being of beings by way of the notion of *skepsis* taken as regard or seeing. See Martin Heidegger, *Hegel's Concept of Experience* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1970, 1989), 55–71, and further 109–12, 126–29 as well as *passim* thereafter; for the transition from being to appearance to experience as presentation and movement, with the last briefly referred to as dialectical and then dialogical, see 113–16. Here and there, for example 129–30, Heidegger uses the rather, in this overall context, strange phrase (perhaps vaguely recalling Schelling and more directly Nietzsche), “the will of the Absolute” (for example, 129), to refer to the role of what would seem to be the Hegelian notion of absolute knowing, but now in the context of his own concern for appearance and presence. Heidegger continues with an almost hymnic description of experience expressed in terms of his own thought including reference to those notions of appearance and presence (120 on). He says, for example, that “*experience is a mode of being present, that is, of Being*” (120, italics in the translated text). In this study, Heidegger focuses in a fascinating way on what is usually referred to as the “Introduction” to Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, with the introduction being a text written before the body of the *Phenomenology* and surely worthy of further close study. For several more classic studies analyzing various aspects of what Hegel says in the introduction, see Schlitt, *Hegel's Trinitarian Claim*, 281n168 (2012).

8. *Experience*, for example, 90 with 119–20. See also Schlitt, *Hegel's Trinitarian Claim*, 186–92 (2012).

9. Working with both a grammar of experience and a phenomenology of experience has permitted recognizing more fully the richness of experience as relation, process, and result. *Experience*, 198.

10. In recounting selected aspects of the overall presentation in *Experience*, but especially in relation to chapter 7, I remain close to the presentation, especially with regard to specific terms needed to express what is being said.

11. In a session of our 2014 PhD seminar in Spirituality of the Trinity, Cliff Knighten reminded us of the complexities around the notion of a resultant sense of wholeness arising out of an experience of God. In situations such as those referred to as a dark night of the soul there is not easily identifiable any such feeling of more immediately resultant wholeness. Further discussion helped us recall that following upon such a dark night experience, there can occur a subsequent experience of wholeness that englobes, so to speak, the prior experience. It would be interesting to pursue this complex question of an experience of God in which there is not as such an experience of resultant wholeness. One might, for instance, take into consideration the notion of the absence of the divine other as a form, in itself, of presence. One might also pay further attention to the more general notions of experience of God and experience of the Trinity as well as possible distinctions

between them. As a first remark, one might note that “dark night” would seem to refer more to experience of God whereas speaking of dark night in relation to experiences of Trinity would seem to be considerably rarer.

12. See James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit: A Study of the Religious and Charismatic Experience of Jesus and the First Christians as Reflected in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1975), 11–92. We might note, however, that Dunn’s position might well need to be qualified by stressing further the mediating and testimonial roles of the Gospels of Mark and Matthew.

13. “So ist über das Herausgehen des Endlichen aus dem Unendlichen zu sagen, das Unendliche gehe zur Endlichkeit *heraus*, darum weil es keine Wahrheit, kein Bestehen an im, wie es als abstrakte Einheit gefaßt est, hat; so umgekehrt geht das Endliche aus demselben Grunde seiner Nichtigkeit in das Unendliche *hinein*.” Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 21, *Wissenschaft der Logik*. Erster Teil: *Die objective Logik*. Erster Band: *Die Lehre von Sein* (1832), ed. Friedrich Hogemann and Walter Jaeschke (Hamburg: Meiner, 1985), 141, lines 22–26/*Hegel’s Science of Logic*, trans. A. V. Miller (New York: Humanities, 1969), 154.

14. In a session of our 2014 PhD seminar in Spirituality of the Trinity, August Higgins brought our attention to a somewhat different approach to arguing to the need for an inclusive infinite. This approach would involve starting reflection from the resultant self as such and recognizing directly in it as such a sense of merely finite realization of inclusion so that one could as well maintain a triadic structure to finite forms of the experience of enrichment and here wholeness. These remarks are my formulation of Higgins’s insight and do not necessarily do justice to his intervention which merits further reflection.

15. For an overview of Hegel on the Kingdom of God, see Dale M. Schlitt, *Divine Subjectivity: Understanding Hegel’s Philosophy of Religion* (Scranton, PA: University of Scranton Press, 2009), 253–95, with brief reference on 284–86 to Hegel’s significant influence on subsequent theological and philosophical understandings of Kingdom of God.

16. Basil continues, “And conversely the natural Goodness and the inherent Holiness and the royal Dignity extend from the Father through the Only-begotten to the Spirit.” “The Treatise *De Spiritu Sancto*.” *A Select Library of [the] Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church. Letters and Selected Works*, 2nd series, vol. 8, *St. Basil: Letters and Selected Works* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1955) chap. 18, para. 47, p. 29 (New York: The Christian Literature Company, 1895 edition, with same pagination as the 1955 edition, accessed July 11, 2014, [http://books.google.com/books?id=ahQNAAAIAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=ahQNAAAIAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false)).

17. Robert R. Williams argues to Hegel’s understanding of spirit as an ultimately intersubjectival dynamic. Concerning Hegel and especially Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*, he says that “Subjectivity finds its culmination in intersubjectivity . . . My thesis is that the idealist model cannot account for the social, but

the social can include and incorporate the idealist model. Moreover, Hegel concludes the *Phenomenology* with the social model." *Recognition: Fichte and Hegel on the Other* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1992), 255. On 283n88, he cites my remarks in *Hegel's Trinitarian Claim*, 151 and 246 (1984), concerning the modified role of otherness once I've critiqued Hegel's understanding of otherness in terms of negation. He suggests that "Schlitt's observations cited above tend to undermine his own reading." However, my observations concerning the constitutively positive and negative aspects of otherness, especially on 246, were made with reference to a transformed reading of Hegel in light of my critique of his thought on otherness rather than affirming what Hegel would say. See also Robert R. Williams, *Hegel's Ethics of Recognition* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997).

18. Succinctly stated, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 20, *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse* (1830), ed. Wolfgang Bonsiepen and Hans-Christian Lucas, with Udo Rameil (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1992), §§ 161, 240/*Hegel's Logic*, trans. William Wallace (Oxford: Clarendon, 1975), §§ 161, 240 (translations here are mine).

19. Wolfhart Pannenberg seems to have sensed years ago something of this idea of generosity as somehow implicit in Hegel's thought when Pannenberg spoke of the essence of "person" consisting in "self-dedication." *Jesus—God and Man* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1968), 181–82. But Pannenberg may have gone a bit far in his own generous reading of Hegel on this point.

20. In referring to what has here been mentioned in a perhaps more inter-subjectival fashion as "relationships," Duane Alexander Miller uses a rather catching phrase: "Trinity is God's revelation to humanity regarding his own experience of who he and what he is. Specifically, that God experiences himself in three modes called Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." *Two Stories of Everything: The Competing Metanarratives of Islam and Christianity* (Ambridge, PA: Whitchurch Publishing, 2016).

## Conclusion

1. Prof. Dr. Ekkehard Mühlenberg suggested these points regarding Neo-Platonism and Christian Trinity several years ago, though the formulation of them is my own and for which I am responsible. See also Giulio Maspero, "Patristic Trinitarian Ontology," in *Rethinking Trinitarian Theology: Disputed Questions and Contemporary Issues in Trinitarian Theology*, ed. Giulio Maspero and Robert J. Wóznia (New York: T & T Clark, 2012), 216–21.

Concerning the much discussed question of the notion of freedom that is signally important in Plotinus, and for the moment we are more concerned with divine freedom, see the helpful distinction, concerning the notion of freedom in the thought of Plotinus, made by Cassian Patrick Gorman, "Freedom in the God of Plotinus," *The New Scholasticism* 14 (1940): 379–405, "We have seen that his

[Plotinus's] conception of divine freedom is totally different from the Christian conception. In place of the freedom which the Christian places between the nature of God and reality, Plotinus posits a freedom which is intrinsic to the nature of God. The divine liberty is made to coincide with the divine essence. The God of Plotinus is not free to will the Many; he is free to be an essence from which the Many must follow necessarily. His freedom is the realization of his essence" (405). See Laura Westra, *Plotinus and Freedom: A Meditation on Enneads 6.8* (Lewiston, NY: Edward Mellen, 1990), for a prolonged and appreciative study of freedom in the thought of Plotinus (e.g., 175), of which she stresses the originality and which she prefers not to see as a precursor of Christian thought (see, for example, 133 and 135, 194). In this study she does not refer to Gorman's article. Rather, she seems to remain with Plotinus's own, as she describes it, original understanding of freedom of the One which appears to be close to that to which Gorman refers as freedom coinciding with the divine essence and certainly not freedom of choice, namely, that God could have created or not created. Westra reminds us that "we really cannot affirm anything about the One" (106), though "the only thing we can surely attest to is pure freedom [with regard to the One]" (110). Juxtaposing several brief quotations from Westra's book will help appreciate the complexity of Plotinus's thought, and interpretation of it, on freedom with a special focus on freedom in relation to the One and to God, as Plotinus understands God (25, regarding this caution by Westra): "The One does not have Freedom but is Freedom. As Cliento [Vincenzo Cliento, an author with whose interpretation of Plotinus on freedom Westra is in general agreement] puts it: 'In conclusion: the One is Freedom. He is no thing; He has no essence. He is absolute and complete Freedom in relation to which even Nous's divine freedom comes second'" (96); "In His [the One's] absolute solitude, in which He is not dependent on or related to anything other than Himself, the One must desire and possess His Act, His Being, for Himself alone (6.8.15). And that, of course represents absolute Freedom" (101); "He [the One] freely creates Himself and everything that is. At that supreme pinnacle He is totally free and alone and is the only example of 'being freely oneself' that we can be aware of" (110); Westra quotes Armstrong approvingly: "Plotinus frequently attacks the idea that God first planned the universe and then created it, and insists that it is everlasting and not the result of divine deliberation and choice but of spontaneous outflow of creative power without beginning or end" (154n16) (see A. H. Armstrong, trans., *Plotinus: Ennead III* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967], 44–45n1 in reference to 3.2[1].1); "For Plotinus . . . Freedom does not admit of further choice; therefore, in a sense, it is a freedom that is necessary" (38); and concerning the finite self, "We should acknowledge that when we understand what our 'real self' is, we must—*ipso facto*—realize that it is a *necessity* of our nature to follow the road back to the One" (103, and see "Freedom and Determinism," 180–86). On the Cappadocians and their creative modifications, see further briefly in Dale M. Schlitt, *Experience and Spirit: A Post-Hegelian Philosophical Theology* (New York:

Peter Lang, 2007), 45–49. On Patristic efforts to assert freedom more specifically within the Trinity see, for example, John D. Zizioulas, “Trinitarian Freedom: Is God Free in Trinitarian Life?” in *Rethinking Trinitarian Theology: Disputed Questions and Contemporary Issues in Trinitarian Theology*, ed. Giulio Maspero and Robert J. Wozniak (London: T & T Clark, 2012), 193–207. Zizioulas speaks of freedom within the Trinity as “personal freedom,” in which there is no temporally prior “given” which is free. He does not identify freedom with substance or essence as it would seem Plotinus does when speaking of God. He writes: “Had it not been for the Trinity, God would have been a necessary being, a monad enslaved to its essence, a being incapable of going out of itself. It is the Trinity that makes God free from the necessity of his essence; had it not been for the Trinity God would require an eternal creation in order to be free to reach beyond his essence, and then he would bind himself necessarily and eternally to creation. By transferring divine freedom from the level of substance to that of personhood, the Fathers rescued theology from eternally binding God to his creation, a danger inherent in pagan religions and to a great extent also in ancient philosophical thought” (197). It might be that Zizioulas has, at least to some extent and with great nuance we cannot capture here, transferred the Plotinian notion of divine freedom as identified with divine essence to the level of divine Person.

2. Lewis Ayres, “Into the Cloud of Witnesses: Catholic Trinitarian Theology beyond and before Its Modern ‘Revivals,’” in *Rethinking Trinitarian Theology: Disputed Questions and Contemporary Issues in Trinitarian Theology*, ed. Giulio Maspero and Robert J. Wozniak (New York: T & T Clark, 2012), 17–18 concerning Augustine’s working at least in certain instances with *similitudo*.

3. More specifically on Hegel, see Ludger Oeing-Hanhoff, “Die geschichtliche Notwendigkeit des Hegelschen Gottesbegriffs,” in *Metaphysik und Freiheit: Ausgewählte Abhandlungen*, ed. Theo Kobusch and Walter Jaeschke (Munich: Erich Wewel, 1988), 123–24. Oeing-Hanhoff argues that Hegel’s focus on subjectivity and relation, rather than on substance, permitted Hegel and others after him to affirm a mutual relationship between God and humankind which, in turn, established the “space” within which human freedom can be exercised.

4. It should be noted that we have not as such focused on defining and describing further specific trajectories of ways in which Hegel and Schelling, in comparison with each other, have influenced subsequent trinitarian thinking beyond several points mentioned here and there such as, for example, Hegel leading in a more monosubjectival direction and Schelling in a more intersubjectival direction.

5. Prof. Stephen Chase noted this in a discussion on this renewed stress on becoming.

6. We could note that this idea of working with experience fits well enough with recent understandings of spirituality, and the rapidly developing field of spirituality studies, as being concerned with lived experience. See, for example, Sandra Schneiders, “Approaches to the Study of Christian Spirituality,” in *The Blackwell*

*Companion to Christian Spirituality*, ed. Arthur Holder (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2005, 2011), 16. One might well further say that experience is the basis upon which philosophy, theology, and religious studies themselves ultimately rest.

7. Prof. Dr. Martin Wendte insightfully brought my attention more fully to the relationships Hegel and Schelling developed between their thought on various religions of the world and their thought on Trinity.

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Dale M. Schlitt presents a study of trinitarian thought as it was understood and debated by the German Idealists broadly—engaging Schelling’s philosophical interpretations of Trinity as well as Hegel’s—and analyzing how these Idealist interpretations influenced later philosophers and theologians. Divided into different sections, one considers nineteenth-century central Europeans Philipp Marheineke, Isaak August Dorner, and Vladimir Sergeyevich Solovyov under the rubric “testimonials.” Another section studies twentieth-century Germans Karl Barth, Karl Rahner, and Wolfhart Pannenberg, who share “family resemblances” with the Idealists, and a third addresses the work of twentieth- and twenty-first century Americans, Robert W. Jenson, Catherine Mowry LaCugna, Joseph A. Bracken, and Schlitt himself, whose work reverberates with what Schlitt terms “transatlantic Idealist echoes.” The book concludes with reflection on the overall German Idealist trinitarian legacy, noting several challenges it offers to those who will pursue creative trinitarian reflection in the future.

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State University of  
New York Press  
[www.sunypress.edu](http://www.sunypress.edu)

ISBN: 978-1-4384-6221-9

